

# SAINT PAULS.

JUNE, 1871.

## WILFRID CUMBERMEDE.

*An Autobiographical Story.*

By GEORGE MAC DONALD, AUTHOR OF "ALEC FORBES," ETC.

### CHAPTER XXVII.

#### A DISAPPOINTMENT.

I TRUST it will not be regarded as a sign of shallowness of nature that I rose in the morning comparatively calm. Clara was to me as yet only the type of general womanhood, around which the amorphous loves of my manhood had begun to gather, not the one woman whom the individual man in me had chosen and loved. How could I love that which I did not yet know: she was but the heroine of my objective life, as projected from me by my imagination—not the love of my being. Therefore, when the wings of sleep had fanned the motes from my brain, I was cool enough, notwithstanding an occasional tongue of indignant flame from the ashes of last night's fire, to sit down to my books, and read with tolerable attention my morning portion of Plato. But when I turned to my novel, I found I was not master of the situation. My hero too was in love and in trouble; and after I had written a sentence and a half, I found myself experiencing the fate of Heine when he roused the Sphinx of past love by reading his own old verses:—

Lebendig ward das Marmorbild,  
Der Stein begann zu ächzen.

In a few moments I was pacing up and down the room, eager to burn my moth-wings yet again in the old fire. And by the way, I cannot help thinking that the moths enjoy their fate, and die in ecstasies. I was however too shy to venture on a call that very morning: I should both feel and look foolish. But there was no more work to be done then. I hurried to the stable, saddled

my mare, and set out for a gallop across the farm, but towards the high road leading to Minstercombe, in the opposite direction, that is, from the Hall, which I flattered myself was to act in a strong-minded manner. There were several fences and hedges between, but I cleared them all without discomfiture. The last jump was into a lane. We, that is my mare and I, had scarcely alighted, when my ears were invaded by a shout. The voice was the least welcome I could have heard, that of Brotherton. I turned and saw him riding up the hill, with a lady by his side.

"Hillo!" he cried, almost angrily, "you don't deserve to have such a cob." (He *would* call her a cob.) "You don't know how to use her. To jump her on to the hard like that!"

It was Clara with him!—on the steady stiff old brown horse! My first impulse was to jump my mare over the opposite fence, and take no heed of them, but clearly it was not to be attempted, for the ground fell considerably on the other side. My next thought was to ride away and leave them. My third was one which some of my readers will judge Quixotic, but I have a profound reverence for the Don—and that not merely because I have so often acted as foolishly as he. This last I proceeded to carry out, and lifting my hat, rode to meet them. Taking no notice whatever of Brotherton, I addressed Clara—in what I fancied a distant and dignified manner, which she might, if she pleased, attribute to the presence of her companion.

"Miss Coningham," I said, "will you allow me the honour of offering you my mare? She will carry you better."

"You are very kind, Mr. Cumbermede," she returned, in a similar tone, but with a sparkle in her eyes. "I am greatly obliged to you. I cannot pretend to prefer old crossbones to the beautiful creature which gave me so much pleasure yesterday."

I was off and by her side in a moment, helping her to dismount. I did not even look at Brotherton, though I felt he was staring like an equestrian statue. While I shifted the saddles, Clara broke the silence which I was in too great an inward commotion to heed, by asking—

"What is the name of your beauty, Mr. Cumbermede?"

"Lilith," I answered.

"What a pretty name! I never heard it before. Is it after any one—any public character, I mean?"

"Quite a public character," I returned—"Adam's first wife."

"I never heard he had two," she rejoined, laughing.

"The Jews say he had. She is a demon now, and the pest of married women and their babies."

"What a horrible name to give your mare!"

"The name is pretty enough. And what does it matter what the woman was, so long as she was beautiful."

"I don't quite agree with you there," she returned, with what I chose to consider a forced laugh.

By this time her saddle was firm on Lilith, and in an instant she was mounted. Brotherton moved to ride on, and the mare followed him. Clara looked back.

"You will catch us up in a moment," she said, possibly a little puzzled between us.

I was busy tightening my girths, and fumbled over the job more than was necessary. Brotherton was several yards ahead, and she was walking the mare slowly after him. I made her no answer, but mounted, and rode in the opposite direction. It was rude of course, but I did it. I could not have gone with them, and was afraid if I told her so she would dismount, and refuse the mare.

In a tumult of feeling I rode on without looking behind me, careless whither — how long I cannot tell, before I woke up to find that I did not know where I was. I must ride on till I came to some place I knew, or met some one who could tell me. Lane led into lane, buried betwixt deep banks and lofty hedges, or passing through small woods, until I ascended a rising ground, whence I got a view of the country. At once its features began to dawn upon me: I was close to the village of Aldwick, where I had been at school, and in a few minutes I rode into its wide straggling street. Not a mark of change had passed upon it. There were the same dogs about the doors, and the same cats in the windows. The very ferns in the chinks of the old draw-well, appeared the same; and the children had not grown an inch since first I drove into the place marvelling at its wondrous activity.

The sun was hot, and my horse seemed rather tired. I was in no mood to see any one, and besides had no pleasant recollections of my last visit to Mr. Elder, so I drew up at the door of the little inn, and having sent my horse to the stable for an hour's rest and a feed of oats, went into the sanded parlour, ordered a glass of ale, and sat staring at the china shepherdesses on the chimney-piece. I see them now, the ugly things, as plainly as if that had been an hour of the happiest reflections. I thought I was miserable, but I know now that although I was much disappointed, and everything looked dreary and uninteresting about me, I was a long way off misery. Indeed the passing vision of a neat unbonneted village-girl on her way to the well, was attractive enough still to make me rise and go to the window. While watching, as she wound up the long chain, for the appearance of the familiar mossy bucket, dripping diamonds, as it gleamed out of the dark well into the sudden sunlight, I heard the sound of horse's hoofs, and turned to see what kind of apparition would come. Presently it appeared, and made straight for the inn. The rider was Mr. Coningham! I drew back to escape

his notice, but his quick eye had caught sight of me, for he came into the room with outstretched hand.

"We are fated to meet, Mr. Cumbermede," he said. "I only stopped to give my horse some meal and water, and had no intention of dismounting. Ale? I'll have a glass of ale too," he added, ringing the bell. "I think I'll let him have a feed, and have a mouthful of bread and cheese myself."

He went out, and had I suppose gone to see that his horse had his proper allowance of oats, for when he returned, he said merrily:

"What have you done with my daughter, Mr. Cumbermede?"

"Why should you think me responsible for her, Mr. Coningham?" I asked, attempting a smile.

No doubt he detected the attempt in the smile, for he looked at me with a sharpened expression of the eyes, as he answered—still in a merry tone—

"When I saw her last, she was mounted on your horse, and you were on my father's. I find you still on my father's horse, and your own—with the lady—nowhere. Have I made out a case of suspicion?"

"It is I who have cause of complaint," I returned—"who have neither lady nor mare—except indeed you imagine I have in the case of the latter made a good exchange."

"Hardly that, I imagine, if yours is half so good as she looks. But, seriously, have you seen Clara to-day?"

I told him the facts as lightly as I could. When I had finished, he stared at me with an expression which for the moment I avoided attempting to interpret.

"On horseback with Mr. Brotherton?" he said, uttering the words as if every syllable had been separately italicized.

"You will find it as I say," I replied, feeling offended.

"My dear boy—excuse my freedom," he returned—"I am nearly three times your age—you do not imagine I doubt a hair's breadth of your statement! But—the giddy goose!—How could you be so silly? Pardon me again. Your unselfishness is positively amusing! To hand over your horse to her, and then ride away all by yourself on that—respectable stager!"

"Don't abuse the old horse," I returned. "He is respectable, and has been more in his day."

"Yes, yes. But for the life of me I cannot understand it. Mr. Cumbermede, I am sorry for you. I should *not* advise you to choose the law for a profession. The man who does not regard his own rights, will hardly do for an adviser in the affairs of others."

"You were not going to consult me, Mr. Coningham, were you?" I said, now able at length to laugh without effort.

"Not quite that," he returned, also laughing. "But a right, you know, is one of the most serious things in the world."

It seemed irrelevant to the trifling character of the case. I could not understand why he should regard the affair as of such importance.

"I have been in the way of thinking," I said, "that one of the advantages of having rights was, that you could part with them when you pleased. You're not bound to insist on your rights, are you?"

"Certainly you would not subject yourself to a criminal action by foregoing them, but you might suggest to your friends a commission of lunacy. I see how it is. That is your uncle all over! *He* was never a man of the world."

"You are right there, Mr. Coningham. It is the last epithet any one would give my uncle."

"And the first any one would give *me*, you imply, Mr. Cumbermede."

"I had no such intention," I answered. "That would have been rude."

"Not in the least. I should have taken it as a compliment. The man who does not care about his rights, depend upon it, will be made a tool of by those that do. If he is not a spoon already, he will become one. I shouldn't have *iffed* it at all if I hadn't known you."

"And you don't want to be rude to me."

"I don't. A little experience will set *you* all right; and that you are in a fair chance of getting if you push your fortune as a literary man. But I must be off. I hope we may have another chat before long."

He finished his ale, rose, bade me good-bye, and went to the stable. As soon as he was out of sight, I also mounted and rode homewards.

By the time I reached the gate of the park, my depression had nearly vanished. The comforting powers of sun and shadow, of sky and field, of wind and motion, had restored me to myself. With a side glance at the windows of the cottage as I passed, and the glimpse of a bright figure seated in the drawing-room window, I made for the stable, and found my Lilith waiting me. Once more I shifted my saddle, and rode home, without even another glance at the window as I passed.

A day or two after, I received from Mr. Coningham a ticket for the county ball, accompanied by a kind note. I returned it at once with the excuse that I feared incapacitating myself for work by dissipation.

Henceforward I avoided the park, and did not again see Clara before leaving for London. I had a note from her, thanking me for Lilith, and reproaching me for having left her to the company of Mr. Brotherton, which I thought cool enough, seeing they had set out together without the slightest expectation of meeting me. I returned a civil answer, and there was an end of it.

I must again say for myself, that it was not mere jealousy of Brotherton that led me to act as I did. I could not and would not get over

the contradiction between the way in which she had spoken of him, and the way in which she spoke to him, followed by her accompanying him in the long ride to which the state of my mare bore witness. I concluded that, although she might mean no harm, she was not truthful. To talk of a man with such contempt, and then behave to him with such frankness, appeared to me altogether unjustifiable. At the same time their mutual familiarity pointed to some fore-gone intimacy, in which, had I been so inclined, I might have found some excuse for her, seeing she might have altered her opinion of him, and might yet find it very difficult to alter the tone of their intercourse.

---

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

## IN LONDON.

My real object being my personal history in relation to certain facts and events, I must, in order to restrain myself from that discursiveness the impulse to which is an urging of the historical as well as the artistic Satan, even run the risk of appearing to have been blind to many things going on around me which must have claimed a large place had I been writing an autobiography instead of a distinct portion of one.

I set out with my manuscript in my portmanteau, and a few pounds in my pocket, determined to cost my uncle as little as I could.

I well remember the dreariness of London, as I entered it on the top of a coach, in the closing darkness of a late autumn afternoon. The shops were not all yet lighted, and a drizzly rain was falling. But these outer influences hardly got beyond my mental skin, for I had written to Charley, and hoped to find him waiting for me at the coach-office. Nor was I disappointed, and in a moment all discomfort was forgotten. He took me to his chambers in the New Inn.

I found him looking better, and apparently, for him, in good spirits. It was soon arranged, at his intreaty, that for the present I should share his sitting-room, and have a bed put up for me in a closet he did not want. The next day I called upon certain publishers and left with them my manuscript. Its fate is of no consequence here, and I did not then wait to know it, but at once began to fly my feather at lower game, writing short papers and tales for the magazines. I had a little success from the first; and although the surroundings of my new abode were dreary enough, although, now and then, especially when the winter sun shone bright into the court, I longed for one peep into space across the field that now itself lay far in the distance, I soon settled to my work, and found the life an enjoyable one. To work beside Charley the most of the day, and go with him in the evening to some place of amusement, or to visit

some of the men in chambers about us, was for the time a satisfactory mode of existence.

I soon told him the story of my little passage with Clara. During the narrative he looked uncomfortable and indeed troubled, but as soon as he found I had given up the affair, his countenance brightened.

"I'm very glad you've got over it so well," he said.

"I think I've had a good deliverance," I returned.

He made no reply. Neither did his face reveal his thoughts, for I could not read the confused expression it bore.

That he should not fall in with my judgment, would never have surprised me, for he always hung back from condemnation, partly, I presume, from being even morbidly conscious of his own imperfections, and partly that his prolific suggestion supplied endless possibilities to explain or else perplex every thing. I had been often even annoyed by his use of the most refined invention to excuse, as I thought, behaviour the most palpably wrong. I believe now it was rather to account for it than to excuse it.

"Well, Charley," I would say in such case, "I am sure *you* would never have done such a thing."

"I cannot guarantee my own conduct for a moment," he would answer;—or, taking the other tack, would reply: "Just for that reason I cannot believe the man would have done it."

But the oddity in the present case was that he said nothing. I should however have forgotten all about it, but that after some time I began to observe that as often as I alluded to Clara—which was not often—he contrived to turn the remark aside, and always without saying a syllable about her. The conclusion I came to was that, while he shrunk from condemnation, he was at the same time unwilling to disturb the present serenity of my mind by defending her conduct.

Early in the spring, an unpleasant event occurred of which I might have foreseen the possibility. One morning I was alone, working busily, when the door opened.

"Why, Charley—back already!" I exclaimed, going on to finish my sentence.

Receiving no answer, I looked up from my paper, and started to my feet. Mr. Osborne stood before me, scrutinizing me with severe gray eyes. I think he knew me from the first, but I was sufficiently altered to make it doubtful.

"I beg your pardon," he said coldly—"I thought these were Charles Osborne's chambers." And he turned to leave the room.

"They *are* his chambers, Mr. Osborne," I replied, recovering myself with an effort, and looking him in the face.

"My son had not informed me that he shared them with another."

"We are very old friends, Mr. Osborne."

He made no answer, but stood regarding me fixedly.

"You do not remember me, sir," I said. "I am Wilfrid Cumbermede."

"I have cause to remember you."

"Will you not sit down, sir? Charley will be home in less than an hour—I quite expect."

Again he turned his back as if about to leave me.

"If my presence is disagreeable to you," I said, annoyed at his rudeness, "I will go."

"As you please," he answered.

I left my papers, caught up my hat, and went out of the room and the house. I said *good morning*, but he made no return.

Not until nearly eight o'clock did I re-enter. I had of course made up my mind that Charley and I must part. When I opened the door, I thought at first there was no one there: there were no lights, and the fire had burned low.

"Is that you, Wilfrid?" said Charley.

He was lying on the sofa.

"Yes, Charley," I returned.

"Come in, old fellow. The avenger of blood is not behind me," he said, in a mocking tone, as he rose and came to meet me. "I've been having such a dose of damnation—all for your sake!"

"I'm very sorry, Charley. But I think we are both to blame. Your father ought to have been told. You see day after day went by, and—somehow—"

"Tut, tut! never mind. What *does* it matter—except that it's a disgrace to be dependent on such a man? I wish I had the courage to starve."

"He's your father, Charley. Nothing can alter that."

"That's the misery of it. And then to tell people God is their father! If he's like mine, he's done us a mighty favour in creating us! I can't say I feel grateful for it. I must turn out to-morrow."

"No, Charley. The place has no attraction for me without you, and it was yours first. Besides I can't afford to pay so much. I will find another to-morrow. But we shall see each other often, and perhaps get through more work apart. I hope he didn't insist on your never seeing me."

"He did try it on; but there I stuck fast, threatening to vanish, and scramble for my living as I best might. I told him you were a far better man than me, and did me nothing but good. But that only made the matter worse, proving your influence over me. Let's drop it. It's no use. Let's go to the Olympic."

The next day, I looked for a lodging in Camden Town, attracted by the probable cheapness, and by the grass of the Regent's Park; and having found a decent place, took my things away while Charley was out. I had not got them, few as they were, in order in my new

quarters before he made his appearance ; and as long as I was there few days passed on which we did not meet.

One evening, he walked in, accompanied by a fine-looking young fellow, whom I thought I must know, and presently recognized as Home, our old school-fellow, with whom I had fought in Switzerland. We had become good friends before we parted, and Charley and he had met repeatedly since.

"What are you doing now, Home?" I asked him.

"I've just taken deacon's orders," he answered. "A friend of my father's has promised me a living. I've been hanging about quite long enough now. A fellow ought to do something for his existence."

"I can't think how a strong fellow like you can take to mumbling prayers and reading sermons," said Charley.

"It ain't nice," said Home, "but it's a very respectable profession. There are viscounts in it, and lots of honourables."

"I daresay," returned Charley, with drought. "But a nerveless creature like me, who can't even hit straight from the shoulder, would be good enough for that. A giant like you, Home!"

"Ah! by the bye, Osborne," said Home, not in love with the prospect, and willing to turn the conversation, "I thought you were a church-calf yourself."

"Honestly, Home, I don't know whether it isn't the biggest of all big humbugs."

"Oh, but—Osborne!—it ain't the thing, you know, to talk like that of a profession adopted by so many great men fit to honour any profession," returned Home, who was not one of the brightest of mortals, and was jealous for the profession just in as much as it was destined for his own.

"Either the profession honours the men, or the men dishonour themselves," said Charley. "I believe it claims to have been founded by a man called Jesus Christ, if such a man ever existed except in the fancy of his priesthood."

"Well, really," expostulated Home, looking, I must say, considerably shocked, "I shouldn't have expected that from the son of a clergyman!"

"I couldn't help my father. I wasn't consulted," said Charley, with an uncomfortable grin. "But, at any rate, my father fancies he believes all the story. I fancy I don't."

"Then you're an infidel, Osborne."

"Perhaps. Do you think that so very horrible?"

"Yes. I do. Tom Paine, and all the rest of them, you know!"

"Well, Home, I'll tell you one thing I think worse than being an infidel."

"What is that?"

"Taking to the church for a living."

"I don't see that."

"Either the so-called truths it advocates are things to live and die for, or they are the veriest old wives' fables going. Do you know who was the first to do what you are about now?"

"No. I can't say. I'm not up in church history yet."

"It was Judas."

I am not sure that Charley was right, but that is what he said. I was taking no part in the conversation, but listening eagerly, with a strong suspicion that Charley had been leading Home to this very point.

"A man must live," said Home.

"That's precisely what I take it Judas said: for my part I don't see it."

"Don't see what?"

"That a man must live. It would be a far more incontrovertible assertion that a man must die—and a more comfortable one too."

"Upon my word, I don't understand you, Osborne! You make a fellow feel deuced queer with your remarks."

"At all events, you will allow that the first of them—they call them apostles, don't they?—didn't take to preaching the gospel for the sake of a living. What a satire on the whole kit of them that word *living*, so constantly in all their mouths, is! It seems to me that Messrs. Peter and Paul and Matthew, and all the rest of them, forsook their livings for a good chance of something rather the contrary."

"Then it *was* true—what they said about you at Forest's?"

"I don't know what they said," returned Charley; "but, before I would pretend to believe what I didn't,——"

"But I *do* believe it, Osborne."

"May I ask on what grounds?"

"Why—everybody does."

"That would be no reason, even if it were a fact, which it is not. You believe it, or rather, choose to think you believe it, because you've been told it. Sooner than pretend to teach what I had never learned, and be looked up to as a pattern of godliness, I would list in the ranks. There, at least, a man might earn an honest living."

"By Jove! You do make a fellow feel uncomfortable!" repeated Home. "You've got such a—such an uncompromising way of saying things—to use a mild expression!"

"I think it's a sneaking thing to do, and unworthy of a gentleman."

"I don't see what right you've got to bully me in that way," said Home, getting angry.

It was time to interfere.

"Charley is so afraid of being dishonest, Home," I said, "that he is rude.—You are rude now, Charley."

"I beg your pardon, Home," exclaimed Charley at once.

"Oh, never mind!" returned Home with gloomy good nature.

"You ought to make allowance, Charley," I pursued. "When a man has been accustomed all his life to hear things spoken of in a certain way, he cannot help having certain notions to start with."

"If I thought as Osborne does," said Home, "I *would* sooner 'list than go into the church."

"I confess," I rejoined, "I do not see how any one can take orders, except he not only loves God with all his heart, but receives the story of the New Testament as a revelation of him, precious beyond utterance. To the man who accepts it so, the calling is the noblest in the world."

The others were silent, and the conversation turned away. From whatever cause, Home did not go into the church, but died fighting in India.

He soon left us—Charley remaining behind.

"What a hypocrite I am!" he exclaimed; "—following a profession in which I must often, if I have any practice at all, defend what I know to be wrong, and seek to turn justice from its natural course."

"But you can't always know that your judgment is right, even if it should be against your client. I heard an eminent barrister say once, that he had come out of the court convinced by the arguments of the opposite counsel."

"And having gained the case?"

"That I don't know."

"He went in believing his own side any how, and that made it all right for him."

"I don't know that either. His private judgment was altered, but whether it was for or against his client, I do not remember. The fact however shows that one might do a great wrong by refusing a client whom he judged in the wrong."

"On the contrary, to refuse a brief on such grounds, would be best for all concerned. Not believing in it, you could not do your best, and might be preventing one who would believe in it from taking it up."

"The man might not get anybody to take it up."

"Then there would be little reason to expect that a jury charged under ordinary circumstances would give a verdict in his favour."

"But it would be for the barristers to constitute themselves the judges."

"Yes—of their own conduct—only that. There I am again! The finest ideas about the right thing—and going on all the same, with open eyes running my head straight into the noose! Wilfrid, I'm one of the weakest animals in creation. What if you found at last that I had been deceiving *you*! What would you say?"

"Nothing, Charley—to any one else."

"What would you say to yourself then?"

"I don't know. I know what I should do."

"What?"

"Try to account for it, and find as many reasons as I could to justify you. That is, I would do just as you do for every one but yourself."

He was silent—plainly from emotion, which I attributed to his pleasure at the assurance of the strength of my friendship.

"Suppose you could find none?" he said, recovering himself a little.

"I should still believe there *were* such. *Tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner*, you know."

He brightened at this.

"You *are* a friend, Wilfrid! What a strange condition mine is!—for ever feeling I could do this and that difficult thing, were it to fall in my way, and yet constantly failing in the simplest duties—even to that of common politeness. I behaved like a brute to Home. He's a fine fellow, and only wants to see a thing to do it. I see it well enough, and don't do it. Wilfrid, I shall come to a bad end. When it comes, mind I told you so, and blame nobody but myself. I mean what I say."

"Nonsense, Charley! It's only that you haven't active work enough, and get morbid with brooding over the germs of things."

"Oh, Wilfrid, how beautiful a life might be! Just look at that one in the New Testament! Why shouldn't I be like that? I don't know why. I feel as if I could. But I'm not, you see—and never shall be. I'm selfish, and ill-tempered, and——"

"Charley! Charley! There never was a less selfish or better-tempered fellow in the world."

"Don't make me believe that, Wilfrid, or I shall hate the world as well as myself. It's all my hypocrisy makes you think so. Because I am ashamed of what I am, and manage to hide it pretty well, you think me a saint. That is heaping damnation on me."

"Take a pipe, Charley, and shut up. That's rubbish!" I said. I doubt much if it was what I ought to have said, but I was alarmed for the consequences of such brooding. "I wonder what the world would be like if every one considered himself acting up to his own ideal!"

"If he was acting so, then it would do the world no harm that he knew it."

"But his ideal must then be a low one, and that would do himself and everybody the worst kind of harm. The greatest men have always thought the least of themselves."

"Yes, but that was because they *were* the greatest. A man may think little of himself just for the reason that he *is* little, and can't help knowing it."

"Then it's a mercy he does know it! for most small people think much of themselves."

"But to know it—and to feel all the time you ought to be and could be something very different, and yet never get a step nearer it! That is to be miserable. Still it is a mercy to know it. There is always a last help."

I mistook what he meant, and thought it well to say no more. After smoking a pipe or two, he was quieter, and left me with a merry remark.

One lovely evening in spring, I looked from my bed-room window, and saw the red sunset burning in the thin branches of the solitary poplar that graced the few feet of garden behind the house. It drew me out to the park, where the trees were all in young leaf, each with its shadow stretching away from its foot, like its longing to reach its kind across dividing space. The grass was like my own grass at home, and I went wandering over it in all the joy of the new spring, which comes every year to our hearts as well as to their picture outside. The workmen were at that time busy about the unfinished botanical gardens, and I wandered thitherward, lingering about, and pondering and inventing, until the sun was long withdrawn, and the shades of night had grown very brown. I was at length sauntering slowly home to put a few finishing touches to a paper I had been at work upon all day, when something about a young couple in front of me attracted my attention. They were walking arm in arm, talking eagerly, but so low that I heard only a murmur. I did not quicken my pace, yet was gradually gaining upon them, when suddenly the conviction started up in my mind that the gentleman was Charley. I could not mistake his back, or the stoop of his shoulders as he bent towards his companion. I was so certain of him that I turned at once from the road, and wandered away across the grass: if he did not choose to tell me about the lady, I had no right to know. But I confess to a strange trouble that he had left me out. I comforted myself however with the thought that perhaps when we next met, he would explain, or at least break, the silence.

After about an hour, he entered, in an excited mood, merry but uncomfortable. I tried to behave as if I knew nothing, but could not help feeling much disappointed when he left me without a word of his having had a second reason for being in the neighbourhood.

What effect the occurrence might have had, whether the cobweb veil of which I was now aware between us would have thickened to opacity or not, I cannot tell. I dare not imagine that it might. I rather hope that by degrees my love would have got the victory, and melted it away. But now came a cloud which swallowed every other in my firmament. The next morning brought a letter from my aunt, telling me that my uncle had had a stroke, as she called it, and at that moment was lying insensible. I put my affairs in order at once, and Charley saw me away by the afternoon coach.

It was a dreary journey. I loved my uncle with perfect confi-

dence and profound veneration, a result of the faithful and open simplicity with which he had always behaved towards me. If he were taken away, and already he might be gone, I should be lonely indeed, for on whom besides could I depend with anything like the trust which I reposed in him? For, conceitedly or not, I had always felt that Charley rather depended on me—that I had rather to take care of him, than to look for counsel from him.

The weary miles rolled away. Early in the morning, we reached Minstercombe. There I got a carriage, and at once continued my journey.

---

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### CHANGES.

I MET no one at the house-door, or in the kitchen, and walked straight up the stair to my uncle's room. The blinds were down, and the curtains were drawn, and I could but just see the figure of my aunt seated beside the bed. She rose, and without a word of greeting, made way for me to approach the form which lay upon it stretched out straight and motionless. The conviction that I was in the presence of death seized me; but instead of the wretchedness of heart and soul which I had expected to follow the loss of my uncle, a something deeper than any will of my own asserted itself; and as it were took the matter from me. It was as if my soul avoided the sorrow of separation by breaking with the world of material things, asserting the shadowy nature of all the visible, and choosing its part with the something which had passed away. It was as if my deeper self said to my outer consciousness: "I too am of the dead—one with them, whether they live or are no more. For a little while I am shut out from them, and surrounded with things that seem: let me gaze on the picture while it lasts; dream or no dream, let me live in it according to its laws, and await what will come next; if an awaking, it is well; if only a perfect because dreamless sleep, I shall not be able to lament the endless separation—but while I know myself, I will hope for something better." Like this at least was the blossom into which, under my after brooding, the bud of that feeling broke.

I laid my hand upon my uncle's forehead. It was icy cold, just like my grannie's when my aunt had made me touch it. And I knew that my uncle was gone, that the slow tide of the eternal ocean had risen while he lay motionless within the wash of its waves, and had floated him away from the shore of our world. I took the hand of my aunt, who stood like a statue behind me, and led her from the room.





"WILFRID CUMBERMEDE."

"  
S  
retu  
reve  
seat  
had  
doct  
only  
aun  
me  
turn  
the  
I  
unc  
and  
foll  
fath  
wor  
tha  
wa  
Up  
of  
tog  
of  
wa  
not  
lin  
lov  
un  
is  
ins  
sh  
ret  
su  
th  
  
wa  
loc  
ha  
th  
a  
a  
  
au

"He is gone, aunt," I said, as calmly as I could.

She made no reply, but gently withdrew her hand from mine, and returned into the chamber. I stood a few moments irresolute, but reverence for her sorrow prevailed, and I went down the stair, and seated myself by the fire. There the servant told me that my uncle had never moved since they laid him in his bed. Soon after, the doctor arrived, and went up-stairs; but returned in a few minutes, only to affirm the fact. I went again to the room, and found my aunt lying with her face on the bosom of the dead man. She allowed me to draw her away, but when I would have led her down, she turned aside, and sought her own chamber, where she remained for the rest of the day.

I will not linger over that miserable time. Greatly as I revered my uncle, I was not prepared to find how much he had been respected, and was astonished at the number of faces I had never seen which followed to the churchyard. Amongst them were the Coninghams, father and son; but except by a friendly grasp of the hand, and a few words of condolence, neither interrupted the calm depression rather than grief in which I found myself. When I returned home, there was with my aunt a married sister, whom I had never seen before. Up to this time, she had shown an arid despair, and been regardless of everything about her; but now she was in tears. I left them together, and wandered for hours up and down the lonely playground of my childhood, thinking of many things—most of all, how strange it was that, if there were a *hereafter* for us, we should know positively nothing concerning it; that not a whisper should cross the invisible line; that the something which had looked from its windows so lovingly, should have in a moment withdrawn, by some back way unknown either to itself or us, into a region of which all we can tell is that thence no prayers and no tears will entice it, to lift for an instant again the fallen curtain, and look out once more. Why should not God, I thought, if a God there be, permit one single return to each, that so the friends left behind in the dark might be sure that death was not the end, and so live in the world as not of the world?

When I re-entered, I found my aunt looking a little cheerful. She was even having something to eat with her sister—an elderly country-looking woman, the wife of a farmer in a distant shire. Their talk had led them back to old times, to their parents and the friends of their childhood; and the memory of the long dead had comforted her a little over the recent loss: for all true hearts death is a uniting, not a dividing power.

"I suppose you will be going back to London, Wilfrid?" said my aunt, who had already been persuaded to pay her sister a visit.

"I think I had better," I answered. "When I have a chance of

publishing a book, I should like to come and write it, or at least finish it here, if you will let me."

"The place is your own, Wilfrid. Of course I shall be very glad to have you here."

"The place is yours as much as mine, aunt," I replied. "I can't bear to think that my uncle has no right over it still. I believe he has, and therefore it is yours just the same—not to mention my own wishes in the matter."

She made no reply, and I saw that both she and her sister were shocked either at my mentioning the dead man, or at my supposing he had any earthly rights left. The next day they set out together, leaving in the house the wife of the head man at the farm to attend to me until I should return to town. I had purposed to set out the following morning, but I found myself enjoying so much the undisturbed possession of the place, that I remained there for ten days; and when I went, it was with the intention of making it my home as soon as I might: I had grown enamoured of the solitude so congenial to labour. Before I left I arranged my uncle's papers, and in doing so, found several early sketches which satisfied me that he might have distinguished himself in literature if his fate had led him thitherward.

Having given the house in charge to my aunt's deputy, Mrs. Herbert, I at length returned to my lodging in Camden Town. There I found two letters waiting me, the one announcing the serious illness of my aunt, and the other her death. The latter was two days old. I wrote to express my sorrow, and excuse my apparent neglect, and having made a long journey to see her also laid in the earth, I returned to my old home in order to make fresh arrangements.

At length  
out M  
the ev  
of the  
lustre  
more  
skies  
Jupite  
vast g  
miles,  
lines  
and v  
visible  
set.  
looked  
with  
The  
time  
positi  
It wa  
those  
the s  
liantl  
stron  
solita  
most  
It  
nome  
priat  
Ther  
tendr  
is m  
theor  
with  
resp  
been  
feel  
shou  
vo

## THE PLANET OF LOVE.

---

At length the true Evening Star reigns supreme in the west. Throughout March, Jupiter was the chief light in the western heavens during the evening twilight hours. In April his rule was divided with that of the star of love. But as he advanced towards the sun's place his lustre slowly waned, while as Venus passed eastwards she grew daily more splendid. Long before the two orbs had met upon the western skies Venus perceptibly outshone Jupiter, and when, after May 12th, Jupiter passed onwards towards the west and Venus eastwards, the vast giant whose light comes to us from beyond so many millions of miles, no longer rivalled the earth's twin sister in lustre. When these lines have appeared, Jupiter will set each evening soon after the sun, and will scarcely be noticed during the short time that he remains visible; while Venus will shine brilliantly for hours after the sun has set. None will need the astronomers to tell them where she is to be looked for, since for months to come no star will bear comparison with her in splendour.

The contrast between Venus and Jupiter (two orbs which at one time during the past spring seemed so strikingly alike that only their position distinguished one from the other) is in reality most complete. It was difficult even for the astronomer to realise the fact that of those orbs one was thirteen hundred times larger than the other, that the surface of the lesser was illuminated some fifty times more brilliantly than that of the farther and greater. It required, too, a strong effort of the imagination to picture to oneself how one orb was solitary, like Mars or Mercury, while the other was the centre of the most symmetrical system of orbs within the planetary scheme.

It may be interesting to consider some of the facts which astronomers have learned respecting the beautiful planet which appropriately bears the name of the loveliest of the heathen goddesses. There is much, indeed, in what is known about Venus which rather tends to disappoint than to satisfy the questioner; much also which is more fitted to invite speculation than to afford any basis for sound theorizing. When we compare what has been learned about Venus with the detailed information which the telescope has given us respecting Mars, or with the grand phenomena whose progress has been traced in the distant orbs of Jupiter and Saturn, we are apt to feel astonished that the planet which approaches us most nearly should have revealed so little, even under the most searching scrutiny.

Yet it is only by comparison with what has been learned about these most interesting orbs, that our information about Venus seems small in amount. In reality there is much which will very well repay our attention, more especially when we consider Venus not merely with reference to what the telescope teaches us respecting her, but also in relation to her position in the scheme of worlds circling around the sun.

It used to be supposed that Venus is rather larger than our own earth. But more careful measurements made in recent times have shown that she is in all probability considerably smaller than the earth. A circumstance had tended to deceive the earlier telescopists. Venus shines with such exceeding brightness as to appear larger than she really is. The fact that bright objects are thus seemingly enlarged is doubtless familiar to most who read this paper. It is strikingly illustrated by the appearance which the new moon presents when the unenlightened half of her globe is visible, or when "the old moon is in the new moon's arms." The dark part appears to belong to a smaller globe than the bright crescent; yet in reality of course the effect is but an optical illusion. Indeed, quite recently astronomers had to reduce their estimate of the moon's mass on account of the very effect I am here referring to. In the case of Venus the effect is, of course, more remarkable, especially when considered with reference to the estimate of Venus's bulk; for she shines much more brilliantly (though of course giving out very much less light altogether) than the moon; and being so much farther away, the same amount of seeming extension outwards corresponds in reality to a much greater error in the estimated diameter. Thus it happens that in Ferguson's astronomy we find the diameter of Venus set down at 7,906 miles, while Sir W. Herschel and Arago set it at 8,100 miles; whereas the estimate now generally regarded as most trustworthy assigns to her a diameter of only 7,500 miles. Thus her estimated bulk has been very considerably diminished; for though her diameter has been reduced but by about one-sixteenth part from Ferguson's estimate, it is easily calculated that her volume has been reduced by fully a seventh part—in which degree it falls short of the earth's. Her surface, which is perhaps a more important feature when we consider her as the probable abode of living creatures, is less than the earth's in the proportion of about nine to ten.

Still, it is hardly necessary to point out that these differences are very slight when compared with those which distinguish the other planets of the solar system from our own earth. Mars, with his diameter of but 4,500 miles, on the one hand, and Uranus, with a diameter of more than 35,000 miles, on the other, seem startlingly unlike our earth after the relations of Venus have been considered; and yet they come next to her in this respect. We have to pass from Mars to small Mercury and the asteroids in following the descending scale of

magni  
and th  
the wh  
hundr  
globe,  
with n  
world,  
twiligh

In c  
has no  
singul  
unkno  
has a  
agree  
can r  
eviden  
the hi  
suppo  
existe  
of tw  
can h  
delud  
that h  
telesc  
was r  
its w  
cocke  
whic  
a pla  
thoug  
lite,  
felt a  
light  
horn  
And  
vision

W  
neces  
comp  
Th  
exam  
with  
anoth  
in he  
nigh  
Venu

magnitude, and to pass from Uranus to Neptune, the ringed Saturn, and the mighty mass of Jupiter, in following the ascending scale. In the whole range of planetary bodies, from Jupiter, more than twelve hundred times bulkier than our earth, down to the least asteroid—a globe, perchance, not larger than Mr. Coxwell's balloon—we meet with not one orb which can be regarded as our earth's twin-sister world, save that globe alone whose glories now illuminate our evening twilight skies.

In one respect only the comparison fails. Unlike our earth, Venus has no moon. I shall not enter here into a consideration of the very singular circumstance that many observers, and some of them not unknown for skill and clear-sightedness, have declared that Venus has a moon, and that they have seen it. Astronomers are now agreed that these observers were deceived, and I suppose little doubt can remain in the minds of all who are competent to weigh the evidence, that Venus has no satellite. Still there are few chapters in the history of astronomy more suggestive than that referring to the supposed discovery of a secondary orb, which has, in reality, no existence. Sir William Herschel's temporary belief in the existence of two rings at right angles to each other around the planet Uranus, can by no means be compared with the strange deception which deluded observers in the case of Venus. For Uranus is so far off that his phenomena are seen only with extreme difficulty; and the telescope with which Sir William Herschel chiefly studied the planet was notoriously imperfect as a defining instrument, notwithstanding its wonderful light-gathering power. It "bunched a star into a cocked-hat" we are told, and in effect it *made* the rings round Uranus which for a time perplexed the great astronomer. But in the case of a planet so near to us, and so bright as Venus, one would have thought an optical illusion, such as the telescopic creation of a satellite, was wholly impossible. Here was an orb of which its observers felt able to say that its diameter was about one-fourth of Venus's, its light slightly inferior to hers in brightness, and its seeming shape horned, or gibbous, exactly as her own at the time of observation. And yet that orb was a mere moon-ghost, an unreal telescopic vision.

We shall inquire farther on, however, whether the want of a moon necessarily renders the skies of Venus at night dark and gloomy by comparison with ours, or, at least, with our moonlit nights.

The chief difficulty which the telescopist meets with in trying to examine the surface of Venus arises from the excessive brightness with which she is illuminated. Of course, I am here referring to quite another matter than that splendour which the unarmed eye recognises in her light. Jupiter, when seen on the dark background of the mid-night sky, shines with a splendour fairly comparable with that of Venus; and yet rather the defect than the excess of light is what

troubles the astronomer in the case of Jupiter. I am referring now to the intrinsic brilliancy of the illumination of Venus's surface—this brilliancy depending on her nearness to the sun. The degree of her brightness may very well be illustrated by an example. Suppose the side of a hill to be so sloped that the sun's mid-day rays fall square upon it. Now, if the slope is covered with white sand, it will shine rather less than half as brightly to the eye as the disc of Venus.\* But we know how dazzling white sand looks when the sun shines full and squarely upon it; so that it will readily be conceived that the disc of Venus tests the performance of even the best telescopes. For it is to be noticed that although the astronomer can cut off a part of the light by suitable contrivances, yet these must needs impair to some degree the clearness of the definition. Besides, some features may be wholly obliterated by any contrivances for reducing the planet's lustre, precisely as the dark glasses used in observing the sun blot from view altogether the coloured prominences and the sierra which really surround his disc.

But, although Venus is thus rendered a difficult object of study, there is one feature in her telescopic aspect which seems to place it in the power of observers to learn more about her surface-contour than even about the details of the planet Mars. Venus travels on a path inside the earth's. Hence she lies, at times, nearly between the earth and the sun, so that her dark half is turned towards us; while at other times she lies directly beyond the sun, so that her illuminated half is turned towards us. Obviously in one case she is presented as the moon at "new," while in the other she is as the moon at "full;" nor does it need much consideration to show that, in passing from one phase to the other, she must exhibit all the changes of aspect which we recognise in the moon. With, however, *this* further peculiarity, that whereas the moon remains always of about the same seeming size while passing through her phases, Venus, on the other hand, changes most notably in size, as seen in the telescope. When she is directly beyond the sun her distance from us is 66 millions of miles greater than the sun's, or about 157 millions of miles in all. When she is directly between us and the sun, her distance falls short

\* This is easily proved. We may be certain that the reflective capacity of Venus's surface is not less than that of the surface of the ruddy Mars. Now Zöllner has shown that Mars reflects rather more of the sunlight which falls on him, than he would if he were a globe of white sandstone. Supposing Venus to do likewise, then as she is so near to the sun as to receive twice as much light as the earth does (surface for surface), her disc must look rather more than twice as bright as white sandstone fully and squarely illuminated. In all such cases (be it noted in passing) distance has no effect. Distance may diminish the brightness of objects seen through air, or other imperfectly transparent media; and of course distance diminishes the total quantity of light received from an object. But distance in no way affects the intrinsic lustre of bodies seen through vacant (or practically vacant) space.

of his  
miles.  
which  
than 8  
at one  
while  
passing  
waxing  
moon.  
Venus  
among  
That  
anagr  
jam fr  
that  
read  
anagr  
"Cyn  
of the  
No  
far of  
and h  
she is  
us, sh  
the s  
full d  
show  
she is  
At  
Venu  
The  
short  
Mars  
other  
edge  
But  
is w  
astro  
tains  
is th  
settl  
earl  
plain  
the  
.  
nate.

of his by 66 millions of miles, or is reduced to about 25 millions of miles. Her distance in the latter case is less than one-sixth of that which separates her from us in the former case; and her disc is more than 86 times larger. So that as she passes from new to full she is at once crescent and waning. Her orb is becoming larger and larger, while a continually diminishing proportion of it is illuminated. In passing away from full to new she decreases in seeming size, while waxing in the sense in which we use the term when speaking of the moon. The reader will doubtless remember how the discovery that Venus actually changes thus in seeming magnitude and phase was among the earliest which Galileo effected by means of the telescope. That his priority might not be questioned he announced the discovery anagrammatically in the following sentence—"Hæc immatura a me jam frustra leguntur, d.y.," which is very bad Latin for the statement that "These matters still immature, and as yet (studied) in vain, are read by me." Four months later he published the key to the anagram in the following much more elegant piece of Latinity—"Cynthiæ figuræ æmulatur mater Amorum," or "Venus, the Mother of the Loves, imitates the changing figures of the moon."

Now when Venus presents her full face towards us she is much too far off to be well seen, and besides she lies directly beyond the sun, and his light prevents us from seeing her. On the other hand, when she is nearest to the earth, her dark hemisphere being turned towards us, she would be invisible even were she not in this case also lost in the sun's light. When she is best seen she presents much less than a full disc; and, in fact, she is actually best placed for study when showing a crescent phase, somewhat like the moon's two days before she is half full.

At first sight it might seem that this should render the study of Venus even more difficult than any of the circumstances yet named. The central part of her disc, just that portion which is alone unforeshortened, can only be seen when Venus is much farther off than Mars is at his nearest—when, also, he is most favourably seen in other respects; while the portion seen when Venus is nearer is seen edgewise, and therefore very unfavourably placed for study.

But in one respect there results a means of studying Venus which is wanting in the case of Mars. I refer to that very means whereby astronomers have been able to measure the height of the lunar mountains. The boundary between the light and dark parts of the moon is the region where, as seen from the moon, the sun is rising or setting. The mountain tops near that boundary catch the sun's light earlier in the lunar morning, and later in the lunar evening, than the plains and valleys close around. Precisely as the traveller who views the phenomena of sunrise from the summit of the Rigi or Faulhorn,\*

\* One is willing to believe that there are travellers who have been so fortunate.

sees the valleys still enshrouded in gloom, while the mountain tops are all illuminated; so out yonder, on our satellite, if there are living creatures there, contrasts of like sort, but much more marked, may be witnessed by such Lunarians as care to climb the summits of the peaks around such craters as Tycho, Kepler, and Copernicus. The telescopist can see the lunar mountains lit up by the sun's rays, when the valleys around are in darkness; for, outside the boundary line, between the light and the dark portions, he sees spots and streaks of white light, which he recognises as the peaks of lunar mountains, or the summits of mountain ranges. And, by measuring the distance at which a lunar peak, which has just caught the light, lies from the boundary between light and darkness—or, as one may say, by measuring how far off the tiny island of light is from the shore-line—he estimates the height of the lunar mountains.

In Venus, similar phenomena are presented. Only her greater distance renders it less easy to study them to advantage. Of course if the planet were a perfectly smooth globe the boundary between the light and dark portions would be quite smooth and uniform. But as early as the year 1700, La Hire could recognise irregularities in the boundary, when the crescent was very narrow. But we owe to the German astronomer, Schröter, the first satisfactory study of these irregularities. Towards the close of the last century he studied the planet with several powerful telescopes; and he was able to recognise distinct inequalities in the boundary. These irregularities varied in figure from time to time, precisely as they might be expected to do when we consider their cause. Now a plain or sea, now a high table-land would be at some particular part of this border-land between light and darkness; now valleys, now mountain peaks would diversify the seeming figure of the boundary. Some of the effects recognised by Schröter were so remarkable as to suggest that the mountains on Venus must be very much higher than those on our earth. Schröter, indeed, estimated the height of some of these mountains at no less than twenty-eight miles, or fully four times the height of the loftiest peaks on our own earth.

A circumstance of some interest may be here touched upon in connection with the researches of Schröter. Sir William Herschel, having failed with his more powerful telescopic means, in detecting any of the appearances recorded by Schröter, wrote a somewhat lively criticism upon Schröter's statement. Of this paper, which appeared in the "*Philosophical Transactions*" for 1798, Arago remarked that it was "*une critique fort vive, et, en apparence du moins, quelque peu passionnée.*" It must be said, however, in justice to the greatest telescopist who has ever lived, that the severity of his tone, though not justified by the actual circumstances, was by no means unwarranted by the facts as he saw them. Misapprehension not injustice led to the warmth of his tone. Schröter answered dis-

passi  
the g  
Th  
or o  
porti  
withi  
great  
they  
appe  
obse  
thes  
teles  
infer  
when  
unab  
Will  
in th  
by th  
pecu  
exist  
reco  
T  
judg  
gree  
astro  
axis  
can  
C  
a ce  
abou  
sligh  
to a  
not  
with  
8 h  
coul  
resu  
had  
mor  
not  
obs  
of  
at t  
bee  
the  
T

passionately and effectively in 1795 ; and no doubt now remains of the general accuracy of the German astronomer's observations.

The irregularities whose effects thus show themselves by notching or otherwise distorting the boundary between the light and dark portions of the disc of Venus, have been detected also as faint spots within the illuminated portion of the disc. It is only, however, with great difficulty, and under exceedingly favourable circumstances, that they can be so seen. And, singularly enough, it would by no means appear as though the most powerful telescopes, or even the greatest observing skill, were the necessary conditions for the detection of these spots. On the contrary, they have been seen with small telescopes when large ones failed to show them ; and comparatively inferior observers, like Bianchini and De Vico, have recognised them, when Sir William Herschel and the eagle-eyed Dawes have been unable to detect any traces of their existence. Indeed, all that Sir William Herschel could detect was a slight superiority of brightness in the part of the disc near the edge as compared with the part close by the boundary-line between the bright and dark portions. This peculiarity he misinterpreted strangely ; for he ascribed it to the existence of an atmosphere in Venus, failing to notice that it is clearly recognisable in the airless moon.

The spots in Venus are not seen distinctly enough to enable us to judge whether they indicate the existence of land and water, like the greenish and the ruddy markings on Mars. But they have enabled astronomers to measure the rate at which Venus turns upon her axis, and they have also shown us how her axis is placed, so that we can form an opinion as to the nature of her seasons.

Cassini was the first to time the rotation of Venus. He found that a certain spot returned to the same place on her face at intervals of about 23 hours, so that the length of the day in Venus would be slightly less than that of our own day. But Bianchini, in 1726, came to a very different, and a very startling, conclusion. He said he could not account for all the changes of appearance he had noted in Venus, without assigning to her a rotation period of 24 days and about 8 hours. Cassini had not been certain about his results, because he could not follow the spot far across the face of Venus. Bianchini's results were open to a somewhat similar objection. His observatory had not sufficient sky-room to enable him to follow the planet for more than about 8 hours. Now he was convinced that the spots did not appreciably change their place in that time ; and having made his observations at somewhat wide intervals, and finding that at the end of several days a spot seemed considerably advanced when observed at the same hour of the night, he concluded that all those days had been occupied in the advance *alone*. Cassini had judged that each day there was a circuit and a slight advance *as well*.

That excellent astronomer, Ferguson, whose book (out of date

as it is) continues far better worth studying than nine-tenths of our modern elementary treatises on astronomy, adopted Bianchini's explanation as seeming to accord best with the evidence. Working out the consequences after his usual sound and laborious fashion, he came to some very strange conclusions respecting the seasonal changes in Venus. Bianchini had seen reason to believe that Venus turns on an axis very much tilted down towards the level of her path round the sun; and the effects of this tilt would be very striking, even though the day of Venus were judged to be equal, or nearly so, to our own. But with the long day of  $24\frac{1}{2}$  terrestrial days, the resulting effects were found by Ferguson to be so strange that nothing we are familiar with on earth could be very well compared with them.

In the first place (according always to Bianchini's estimate) there are but  $9\frac{1}{2}$  days in the year of Venus.\* "We may suppose," says Ferguson, "that the inhabitants of Venus will be always careful to add a day to some particular part of every fourth year, by means of which intercalary day every fourth year will be a leap-year, and will bring her time to an even reckoning, and keep her calendar always right."

Then the day lasting so long, the sun's mid-day height would be very different on successive days; so that if at any place he were overhead at noon on one day, he would be found far removed from the point overhead at noon of the next day. "This appears to be providentially ordered," says Ferguson, "for preventing the too great effects of the sun's heat (which is twice as great on Venus as on the

\* In my "Other Worlds" there is a note referring to a remark in Admiral Smyth's "Celestial Cycle," which had gravely perplexed me. For the Admiral says that in the year of Venus there are but  $9\frac{1}{2}$  of her days, "reckoned by the sun's rising and setting, owing to which the sun must appear to pass through a whole sign in little more than three quarters of her natural day." In the note referred to, I remark on this, "he gives no reason for this remarkable statement, which most certainly is not correct." I might well, indeed, be perplexed, not only by this particular statement, but by the whole of the Admiral's treatment of the seasonal and diurnal changes in Venus. For though he nowhere adopts Bianchini's estimate of Venus's rotation-period (on the contrary, he remarks that Schröter's researches have established Cassini's value), yet none of his statements are just if Venus turns round in about 24 hours. I have recently found that all Admiral Smyth's remarks on the seasonal and diurnal changes in Venus were founded on Ferguson's examination of the matter. So that their incongruity is at once accounted for. But it is worthy of notice how important it is that no statement—however eminent its authority—should be repeated without due examination, or failing that (as may well happen when a subject is very recon-dite), a careful reference to the source whence the statement has been drawn. Admiral Smyth doubtless thought that so accurate a mathematician as Ferguson could not go wrong, and so, neglecting inquiry, failed to notice that he was himself misinterpreting Ferguson. On the other hand, I was somewhat sharply censured for questioning the dicta of so sound a mathematician as the esteemed Admiral; yet it is now shown how necessary such questioning was in that instance. But in truth it is always so. Doubt in such matters ought to be held as an almost sacred duty by the scientific author.

earth); so that he cannot shine perpendicularly on the same places for two days together; and on that account the heated places have time to cool." One would have thought the long night of 292 hours would fairly have sufficed for this desirable purpose; but in Ferguson's day men knew more about the final causes of things than we do in our time, so that it is only with extreme diffidence that I venture this suggestion.

When Ferguson wrote, the astronomers of England were paying great attention to the problem of finding a ship's longitude at sea. Ferguson points out how much better off the people in Venus are as respects their means of dealing with this problem. "The sun's altitude at noon being very different at places in the same latitude, according to their different longitudes, it will be almost as easy to find the longitude on Venus, as it is for us to find the latitude on our earth, which is an advantage we can never have." Here is another instance of an easily interpretable design. For our seamen have the moon to help them in finding the longitude; and the voyagers over Venus would be badly off without a moon but for the peculiarity pointed out by Ferguson.

But it is as well, before inquiring what purpose was intended to be fulfilled by certain relations, to assure ourselves that those relations actually exist. For example, before asking why the people in Jupiter and Saturn get so much more moonlight from their many moons than we do from our single one, it is as well to calculate how much light they do actually get; because the argument from design is slightly interfered with when the multiple moonlight in Saturn and Jupiter is found to amount in all to scarce a twentieth of that which our single moon supplies to us. So here, in the case of Venus, it is unpleasing, after calculating all the important advantages afforded by the long day of Venus, to discover that the day in Venus is actually rather less than on our own earth.

This, however, has now been abundantly proved. Schröter, by carefully noting the interval which elapsed between the successive appearances of a certain bright spot close by the southern horn of the crescent Venus, assigned a rotation-period of 23 days 21 minutes and 8 seconds. This was within a minute of the time which had been assigned by the younger Cassini as bringing his father's observations into agreement with Bianchini's. But the Italian observer, De Vico, attacked the question still more earnestly. He and several colleagues studied Venus at the Observatory of the Collegio Romano. They rediscovered Bianchini's spots, and by carefully comparing their own estimate of the planet's rotation with the observed appearance of Venus at such and such hours as recorded by Bianchini, they were able to deduce a very close approximation to the rotation-period of Venus. They assigned as the actual length of the day in Venus 23 hours 21 minutes 23 seconds and 98 hundredth parts of a second.

Without accepting these hundredths as altogether beyond dispute, we may take 23 hours 21 minutes and 24 seconds as doubtless very closely representing the value of Venus's rotation-period.

Here, then, we have a day closely corresponding to that of our own earth, and also to that of Mars. In fact, the day of Venus falls short of our earth's day by about as much as the day of Mars exceeds our earth's. Instead of the year of  $9\frac{1}{2}$  of her own days assigned to Venus by Bianchini, we find that she has a year of about 290 days. There is little reason then, thus far, for supposing that the seasonal and diurnal changes in Venus differ importantly from those on our own earth.

But undoubtedly when we inquire into other circumstances on which the seasons and general climate of a planet must depend, we find some difficulty in regarding Venus as likely to be a quite agreeable abode for creatures constituted like ourselves. Before discussing these relations, however, let me as an anticipatory corrective present the enthusiastic description which Flammarion has given of that which he can have seen only with his mind's eye, and that eye gifted with exceptional, and possibly deceptive, powers. "Some ill-disposed minds," he says, as translated—most pleasingly—by Mrs. Lockyer, "have asserted that although Venus is beautiful afar, it is frightful on a nearer view. I fancy I see my young and amiable readers; and I am sure that not one amongst them is of this opinion. Indeed, all the magnificence of light and day which we enjoy on the earth, Venus possesses in a higher degree. Like our globe, it is surrounded by a transparent atmosphere, in the midst of which are combined thousands and thousands of shades of light. Clouds rise from the stormy ocean, and transport into the sky snowy, silvery, golden, and purple tints. At morning and evening, when the dazzling orb of day, twice as large as it appears from the earth, lifts its enormous disc at the east, or inclines towards the west, the twilight unfolds its splendours and charms."

This is very pleasant to contemplate; but it is desirable to inquire how far it is warranted by known facts.

To begin with the excessive light and heat which the sun pours upon Venus. I suppose no one doubts that quite possibly this great light and heat may be so tempered as to be not only endurable, but pleasant to people in Venus. But so far as terrestrial experience is concerned, we are assuredly not justified in saying that this *must* be so. Undoubtedly, if the sun began suddenly to pour twice as much light and heat upon the earth as he actually does, the human race would be destroyed in a very few months. In tropical regions the destruction would be completed in a single day. In temperate regions the beginning of the first summer would be fatal. Nor would the denizens of arctic and subarctic regions live through the heat of a midsummer's nightless day.

Suppose, now, we assume that the atmosphere of Venus, as good observers have judged, is considerably deeper than our own. This we may fairly do, because certainly the estimate of observers would be more likely to fall short of the truth than to pass beyond it; so that, when trustworthy astronomers say that they have seen the twilight zone of Venus extending farther than we know our own does, we may fairly conclude that at a nearer view a yet greater extension of this sunlit atmosphere—for such is the real nature of the source of twilight—would be greater yet. Here, again, all that we know of the effects of a deep atmosphere would lead us to believe that the heat in Venus must be intensified by the action of her deep and dense atmosphere. As a matter of fact, it may not be so. All I urge is, that, judging from the only analogy we have to guide us, the depth and density of the atmosphere of Venus seem to promise no relief from the intense solar heat to which she is exposed.

But it is when we consider the effects of her axial slope that we find the most urgent reasons for questioning how far life would be comfortable to ourselves in that beautiful planet which now adorns our twilight skies.

Bianchini believed in an amount of axial tilt (a tilt of the axis, that is, from uprightness to the path of Venus) which has not been confirmed by De Vico and his colleagues. Still their observations agree in assigning an axial tilt much more than twice as great as the earth's. In other words, the arctic regions in Venus extend more than twice as far from her poles as ours do, and her tropical regions extend more than twice as far as ours from the equator. But we have only to take a terrestrial globe to see that, if we extend more than doubly the range of the tropics and of the arctic regions, these regions will overlap. There will be no temperate zone at all. Instead of it, there will be a region which is both tropical and arctic.

Now, when we remember what is meant when we speak of a region as tropical or arctic, the significance of this statement will be recognised. At a place within the tropics the sun is always twice in each year immediately overhead at noon. At a place within the arctic regions there is always one period in the year when the sun does not rise, and another period when he does not set, all through the twenty-four hours.

Conceive, then, first, the vicissitudes within the zone which is both arctic and tropical. Here we have, at one season, an arctic night—no sun shining all through the twenty-four hours; at another, an arctic day—the sun not setting during all those hours. Between these seasons, but nearer to the latter, we have two seasons, when the sun is overhead at noon. The contrast between the bitterness of a season when the sun does not show at all, and the fiercely scorching heat of seasons when either the great sun of Venus does not set, or shines vertically down at noon upon such beings as may be able to endure

his fury, is certainly not a pleasant prospect for terrestrial beings to contemplate. The young lady whom Flammarion lauds because she promised "swiftly to soar to Venus" when her "imprison'd soul was free," would have been justified in declining the visit on the score of expediency, while still encumbered with a body. And if "now," as Flammarion suggests, "she resides in that isle of light, and contemplates thence the earthly abode which she not long ago inhabited, perhaps she hears," not without amusement, "the prayers of those who, as she did formerly, allow their hopes to mount sometimes" to those pleasant-looking regions.

Nor are the tropical or arctic regions more likely to be comfortable abodes for creatures constituted like ourselves. The seasonal contrasts and vicissitudes in these regions are always very marked, and recur much more rapidly than on our own earth. If the arctic regions are worse off in having a more marked difference between the greatest heat of summer and the greatest cold of winter, the tropical regions are worse off in having two summers and two winters within the short year of two hundred and twenty-seven terrestrial days.

I cannot but think that on a fair examination of the physical habitudes of Venus, we are led rather to Whewell's than to Brewster's opinion; though I am by no means ready to admit that either one or the other opinion is strictly sound. It is but barely possible, if possible at all, that Venus may be a suitable abode for creatures like ourselves and our fellow-inhabitants of this terrestrial globe. But we have no sufficient reasons for believing with Whewell that creatures so constituted as to exist in comfort in Venus must needs be wholly inferior to those which inhabit the earth.

One word on the celestial scenery visible from Venus. It is a circumstance worth noticing that from all the three planets which have no moons, at least one orb can be so seen as to appear more beautiful than any star or planet in our own skies. Jupiter, as seen from Mars, must appear a most noble orb, since his splendour, owing to the greater proximity of Mars (when most favourably situated for observing Jupiter), must be one half greater than that which he displays to ourselves. His satellites, too, may probably be visible from Mars. In the planet Venus, again, Mercury has a noble spectacle. Her lustre, indeed, when seen under the most favourable circumstances, must illuminate the skies of Mercury with a splendour surpassing ten or twelve times that of the planet Jupiter as we see him on a midnight sky. From Mercury also the earth must seem a noble orb, her attendant moon being probably distinctly visible. Venus has not, like Mercury, a view of two planets surpassing Jupiter in splendour. But, on the other hand, the earth as seen from Venus must be the most beautiful spectacle visible throughout the whole range of the solar system. To vision such as ours the earth must present the figure of a disc, because we know that under favourable

circu  
with  
colou  
terre  
times  
the g  
enha  
white  
about  
in col  
we do  
to stu  
when  
diam  
light  
stanc  
from  
when  
centu  
is hal  
disc  
distan  
his g  
shino  
except  
ruddy  
When  
by no  
where  
neare  
intrin  
that  
Venu  
ing o  
solic

• T  
seen f  
which

circumstances we can ourselves recognise the crescent form of Venus with the unaided eye. This disc cannot fail to exhibit varying colours; now appearing greenish, now reddish, according as the terrestrial seas or oceans are more fully turned towards Venus; while at times, when the atmosphere of our earth is heavily laden with vapours, the glory of the earth as a light in the skies of Venus must be greatly enhanced, the earth's lustre being at such times, however, purely white. In the meantime the moon must be distinctly visible, as a disc about one fourth as large as the earth's in diameter, and not changing in colour as hers does, unless indeed it chances that the side of the moon we do not see differs very much in character from the portion we are able to study.\* The seeming distance separating the moon from the earth when they are farthest apart will be somewhat greater than the seeming diameter of the moon as we see her. It need hardly be said that the light actually received from the earth and moon under these circumstances must be very much greater than that which we receive either from Jupiter or Venus when at their brightest. We know that Mars, when seen under most favourable circumstances (once in about a century), is fairly comparable with Jupiter; but at such times Mars is half as far again from us as we are from Venus; he would show a disc much less than half the earth's if both were seen at the same distance; and he is illuminated less than one-half as brightly, owing to his greater distance from the sun. On all these accounts the earth must shine many times more splendidly than Mars does, even on those exceptional occasions when (as once during the last century) his ruddy orb blazes so resplendently as to be mistaken for a new star. When it is remembered, too, that Venus is seen most brightly when by no means at her nearest, and when showing less than a half disc, whereas the earth is seen most favourably from Venus when at her nearest, and showing a full disc, it will be seen that the greater intrinsic lustre of Venus is much more than counterbalanced, and that the earth with her companion moon, as seen from the planet Venus, must form a far more glorious spectacle (besides appearing on a far darker sky) than the Planet of Love when most she solicits our admiration.

RICHARD A. PROCTOR.

\* The actual amount of light received from the earth and moon together, as seen from Venus, probably amounts to nearly the five-hundredth part of that which we receive from the moon at full.

## IN THE PORCH.

BY A SUMMER-DAY STOIC.

---

"Cultivons notre jardin."

---

Across my neighbour's waste of whins  
For roods the rabbit burrows ;  
You scarce can see where first begins  
His range of steaming furrows ;  
I am not sad that he is great,  
He does not ask my pardon ;  
Beside his wall I cultivate—  
I cultivate my garden.

I envy not my neighbour's trees,  
To me it nothing matters  
Whether in east or western breeze  
His "dry-tongued laurel patters."  
Me too the bays become ; but still,  
I sleep without narcotics,  
Though he can bind his brows at will  
With odorous exotics.

My neighbour, those for whom you shine  
Magnificent assert you ;  
Extol your wisdom and your wine—  
Your venison and your virtue :  
So be it. Still for me the gorse  
Will blaze about the thicket ;  
The Common's purblind pauper horse  
Will peer across my wicket ;

For me the geese will thread the furze,  
In hissing file, to follow  
The tinker's sputtering wheel that whirs  
Across the breezy hollow ;  
And look, where smoke of gipsy huts  
Curls blue against the bushes,  
That little copse is famed for nuts,  
For nightingales and thrushes !

But hark ! I hear my neighbour's drums !  
Some dreary deputation  
Of Envy, or of Wonder, comes  
In guise of adulation.  
Poor neighbour ! Though you like the tune,  
One little pinch of care is  
Enough to clog a whole balloon  
Of *aura popularis* ;

Not amulets, nor epiderm  
As tough as armadillo's,  
Can shield you if Suspicion worm  
Betwixt your easy pillows ;  
And, though on ortolans you sup,  
Beside you shadowy sitters  
Can pour in your ungenial cup  
Unstimulating bitters.

Let Envy crave and misers save,  
Let Folly ride her circuit ;  
I hold that, on this side the grave,  
To find one's vein and work it,  
To keep one's wants both fit and few,  
To cringe to no condition,  
To count a candid friend or two,—  
May bound a man's ambition.

Swell, South-wind, swell my neighbour's sails ;  
Fill, Fortune, fill his coffers ;  
If Fate has made his *rôle* the whale's,  
And me the minnow's offers ;  
I am not sad that he is great,  
He need not ask my pardon ;  
Beside his wall I cultivate—  
I cultivate my garden.

AUSTIN DOBSON.

---

## MISAPPLIED CHARITIES.

---

We hope that the gratifying interest which is now being exhibited in the cause of Primary Education will not altogether divert public attention from the kindred subject of Secondary Education. We trust that the Elementary Education Act of 1870 will not throw into the shade the Endowed Schools Act of 1869. For the objects proposed by the latter are but one degree less important than those contemplated by the former. There are still parts of the country where the labourer's son can get a better education at the National or British school, than his master's son can obtain at the local grammar school or private "academy."

To correct such an inconsistency as this, to remodel the enormous educational endowments which have scattered grammar schools over the country, and by so doing, to provide a sound liberal education for the middle-class, these are the aims of the Act of 1869. A permanent Commission has, as our readers are aware, been appointed under that Act, with power to propose schemes for the reorganization of the endowed schools, and for the rearrangement of them in the mode best calculated to meet the wants of each district. The Report of the Schools' Inquiry Commissioners, upon which the Act is based, forms, with the evidence, a repertory of information on the subject, the value of which it is impossible to overrate. If similar ability is shown in carrying out the Act, to that which was evinced in the preparation of this Report, secondary education in England will not long remain in its present chaotic and unsatisfactory state.

But, setting aside for the present any further reference to the main functions of the commissioners, we wish to draw attention to one of the subordinate features of the Act—viz., the proposed conversion to purposes of education, under the superintendence of the Commission, of endowments originally granted for other objects, such as endowments designed by the founder to be distributed in loans, in marriage dowries to maidens, in apprenticeship fees for boys, in the establishment of almshouses, in doles of money or kind to the poor, or in other modes now become obsolete. It is perhaps almost impossible to arrive at an exact estimate of the value of these charities. Mr. Hare, the Charity Inspector, calculates that the endowments set apart for apprenticing and advancement in life amount to £50,000 a year, in addition to £70,000 a year for apprenticing, coupled with other objects. The general charities for the poor are computed in the

Reports of the late Charity Commissioners at £167,908 per annum ; but as the income of many of them is derived from landed property, which has, in numerous instances, increased considerably in value, while the capital of others is accumulating, this estimate, based on data collected more than thirty years ago, is doubtless below the mark. It would probably be not an exaggeration to compute the present annual income of these endowments at £200,000. They are distributed over the country very unequally both as to number and amount, Cardigan being the poorest county, with ten guineas a year, while Norfolk has more than ten thousand a year. The disparity observable in their distribution, however, is not more remarkable than the variety of the purposes to which they are applied. The particulars of these endowments in the two thick volumes which form the Analytical Digest of the Reports of the Charity Commissioners, furnish the materials for an unrivalled collection of the curiosities of bequest. Endowments for objects which only the most crotchety and whimsical benevolence could suggest ; endowments coupled with conditions at once eccentric and injurious, or restricted in their operation by local feelings incomprehensible to us whose sympathies are widened by greater facilities of communication ; endowments, again, which set up radically vicious standards of fitness, uniting divine service and doles, bibles and bread, sacramental observance and suits of clothing ; endowments, finally, which appear to have been founded rather with the view of proclaiming the antipathy of the donor against those whom he excluded from his bounty, than his sympathy with those whom he wished to share it.

What now has been the influence of these charities upon the persons they were intended to benefit ? Have they, as the donors contemplated they would, relieved the needy, provided homes for the destitute, clothed the naked, fed the hungry, or placed a successful career within the reach of the deserving poor ? Obviously the influence of the annual distribution of so large a sum cannot have been merely negative ; it must have produced either positive good or positive harm. There can, we think, be no doubt that the harm has far exceeded the good. Dating, as many of these endowments do, from the old monastic times, their action has been tainted with the vice which characterised the old monastic alms-giving—they relieve the pauper, but confirm his pauperism. It is really difficult to discover any considerable minority of instances in which these charities have not worked lasting injury to the locality they were meant to benefit. Here and there, indeed, the enervating influences of the almsgiving seem to have been counteracted by the discretion and care of exceptionally active and intelligent trustees ; but such cases are rare. As a rule, each of these endowments forms, in the words of Dr. Chalmers, “an adhesive nucleus, around which the poor accumulate and settle, misled by vague hopes of benefit which the charities fail to confer ;

while they occasion a relaxation of economy and of the relative duties of parents, children, and relations, which is in the ratio of the hope that is felt, and not of the hope that is realised." Thus, these doles promote pauperism rather than relieve indigence. They do not even inspire gratitude, for what was offered as a favour is accepted as a right. If, from any cause, the bounty ceases, the recipient is more likely to feel that he has been unjustly deprived of an income which he had counted on, than that, for a certain time, he has enjoyed an addition to his means which he had no claim to. The donor wished, by special provision for special needs, to kindle hope and stimulate endeavour; the recipient regards the bounty as a certainty, intended to spare him some exertion he would otherwise have made, or to exempt him from some economy he would otherwise have practised. But the great merit of all charity is its uncertainty. It may be well that absolute destitution should be averted by the certainty of the Poor Law—that rescue from literal starvation should be claimed from the State as a right, and not asked as a boon; but when once this has been conceded, it is only exceptional distress and unavoidable privations, which are the proper objects of charity. And the indispensable conditions of the beneficial exercise of charity are personal investigation, and a wise adaptation of the bounty to the peculiar exigencies of each case. But these are the very conditions in which endowments, recurring at specified intervals, restricted in area, and administered by agents, are deficient. The tendency of the latter is always to create the very wants they were meant to remove. It is only living charities, distributed under the sense of individual responsibility, that can adequately grapple with emergencies, or distinguish between deserving poverty and confirmed mendicancy. It is well known that the pauperism of a country is affected by hardly anything so much as by the care exercised in the bestowal of out-door relief. A judicious application of relief, based upon intimate acquaintance with the merits of each claim, is a wondrous promoter of thrift and providence; while a lax administration shows itself in the disinclination of labourers to support their parents, or to look out for better employment. Now these charities are simply a system of out-door relief, dispensed under absurd conditions, without organization, and secured by none of those precautions which are sure to operate to a greater or less extent when the application of the funds is open to the criticism of the ratepayers.

The truth is that the great bulk of these endowments were founded under the idea that poverty can be cured or permanently alleviated by the simple transfer of so much wealth from the pockets of the rich to those of the poor, instead of by the promotion amongst the needy of habits of industry, frugality, and independence. Now the former plan appeals at once to two very strong feelings. It places the recipient of the charity in a position of grateful dependence upon the

wea  
it is  
labo  
fore  
imm  
com  
to r  
char  
of c  
with  
to s  
cent  
A  
Her  
daug  
quer  
and  
of S  
phy  
was  
dire  
eigh  
App  
by  
app  
app  
helo  
"I  
the  
cha  
it."  
tota  
pari  
All  
into  
hov  
Jar  
buil  
the  
wh  
run  
pop  
and  
oce  
tim  
pier

wealthy giver, which is naturally gratifying to the pride of the latter; it is, moreover, much more easy of execution than the slow and laborious inculcation of habits of providence and thrift, and is, therefore, in accord with the desire, so common to all of us, to see an immediate return for our endeavours. But, there is no royal road to competency and comfort. Money doles, capriciously distributed, tend to make men liars or slaves. The idea of the founders of these charities undoubtedly was to circulate through the country a stream of charity, which should invigorate many a stunted plant and many a withering tree. But the brooks and rivulets which should have helped to swell that stream have become stagnant pools, each of which is a centre of decay, corrupting the vegetation it should have fertilized.

About seventy-seven years ago, George Jarvis, a resident in Herefordshire, died possessed of great wealth. Annoyed with his daughter's marriage, he disinherited all his descendants, and bequeathed the bulk of his property in trust to the Bishop of Hereford and the two county members, to apply the income amongst the poor of Stanton-upon-Wye, Bredwardine, and Letton, in money, provisions, physic, and clothing. As the property amounted to nearly £100,000, it was felt that the income of so large a sum spent according to Jarvis's directions, in three parishes, the united population of which was about eight hundred and fifty, would be simply a premium upon idleness. Application was accordingly made to the Court of Chancery in 1802, by Sir Samuel Romilly on behalf of the trustees, for permission to appropriate a certain proportion of the endowment in education, apprenticing, and in "rewards of virtue." Lord Eldon, however, held that the charity must be administered according to the bequest. "I have nothing to do," said he, "with the argument of policy. If the legislature thinks proper to give the power of leaving property to charitable purposes, however prejudicial, the Court must administer it." The amount to be thus distributed annually nearly equalled the total sum of the wages of the labouring population in the three parishes. The consequences of the doles were simply disastrous. All the lazy and incapable poor from the surrounding district swarmed into the three parishes. Adequate cottage accommodation could not, however, be provided by the trustees, for, with ingenious perversity, Jarvis had forbidden that any of his money should be spent in building. All the evils of overcrowding were soon experienced. As the local gentry would make no provision for a worthless population whom they did not invite, the newcomers herded into wretched hovels, run up by themselves on the waste land. In thirty years the pauper population increased 60 per cent. Meanwhile the gifts of money and food were each year more recklessly distributed. On several occasions one hundred and twenty pounds of beef were given at one time to a single family. The pauperism and helplessness of the recipients were steadily augmented, until, deprived of the ordinary stimulus

to exertion, they sank into a state nearly resembling that of the reptile, whose life consists in the alternation of periods of repletion and of want. At length, in 1852, an Act of Parliament was obtained by which the prohibition to build was abrogated, and the doles of food and clothing were restricted to about 16 per cent. of the income of the charity, then about £3,000 a year. Authority was given by this Act to the trustees to build schools in each of the three parishes, and further, to maintain, clothe, and subsequently apprentice the children who should attend. But the fatuity which suggested the will, seems to have infected all who had to carry out the trust. Obviously one of the worst features in the bequest was the limitation of its benefits to so insignificant an area, yet that limitation was continued by the Act. No provision was made for the improvement of the cottages, but under the Act £30,000 has been spent in boarding and educating the children who, when they leave school, will return to these deplorable hovels. Now the county of Herefordshire claimed and received in the year 1869, under the Revised Code, the sum of £1,800 towards the support of its primary schools; a less sum, be it observed, than was spent during the same period, under George Jarvis's will, in demoralizing the inhabitants of three of the parishes in that county.

But undue restriction of the area of the operation of a charity is not more hurtful than restriction to particular families. The valuable property situate near South Kensington Museum, including Thurlow and Onslow Squares, is vested in the trustees of a Mr. Smith, who, at the time of the Restoration, left it in trust for the exclusive benefit of the family of the Smiths. The proceeds of this charity—which it is said will, at its present rate of increase, soon reach to £50,000 a year—are applied, according to the terms of the trust, to the education of the Smiths, to their apprenticing, and to their relief when old. Shares of the property have been appropriated to certain parishes. The trustees are supposed to be always looking after the needy and destitute members of the Smith family. A firm of London solicitors keeps a pedigree of that family, and tests thereby the validity of each application. But the house of Smith does not appear to have been particularly benefited by the charity of their illustrious ancestor. Under the trust there is a provision for a decayed tailor of the family, and a tailor at the requisite stage of decay is never wanting. Mr. Hare appears to imagine that the Smiths are never likely by ill-advised opulence to defeat the benevolent intentions of the founder of this endowment, for “you will probably find,” he observes, “an indisposition to be too rich among the whole family of the Smiths.” The Guy family has been the object, or, shall we say, the victim, of a charity of a similar kind, and it appears that there never was a Guy who was not a pauper.

Many of the charities dating from the sixteenth century were founded with the design of supplementing the action of the famous

poor-law of Elizabeth. That Act undertook, on the part of the public, to provide work and wages for all the destitute able-bodied ; and these foundations contemplated a similar provision in particular localities. For example, Watts' Charity at Rochester was created for the establishment and maintenance of a house "to lodge poor travellers, being no common rogues or proctors," each traveller to receive four-pence. Further, under Watts' will, flax and hemp were to be purchased "to set the poor of the city to work." From the date of its foundation down to a recent period the charity was applied as a part of the ordinary poor-law administration. As such, therefore, its operation was characterised by all the abuses for which the poor-law of Elizabeth is now notorious. But the Court of Chancery having prohibited the application of the funds of the charity to the purposes with which the revised poor-law undertook to deal, on the ground that such an appropriation of them was rather a relief to the rich than to the poor, the operations of the trustees were confined to the house for wayfarers. The effect of that arrangement is simply to concentrate at Rochester a large number of vagrants, and to confirm that helpless dependence upon others which is the foundation of pauperism.

Often, however, to the evil of an unwise restriction of the scope of a charity, is added the still greater evil of negligent trustees. The latter, indeed, is sometimes the offspring of the former. A charity has, in the course of years, increased in a much greater ratio than the population of the district to which, by the foundation, it is limited. The trustees find themselves possessed of larger funds than they know how to distribute without largely adding to the amount of each dole, or to the number of the recipients. An appeal to the Court of Chancery for an alteration of the trust is an expensive and irksome process. Meanwhile all the lazy and improvident folk in the neighbourhood have scented out the charity, as the fly scents carrion, and the trustees are exposed to every form of solicitation and importunity. To give without inquiry is easy and popular ; to investigate each claim, and then perhaps to refrain from giving, is sure to excite odium, while at the same time it adds still more to the surplus already accumulated. Under such conditions, even a conscientious trustee is likely to become negligent ; an unconscientious one simply gives to the applicant whose entreaties are the most persistent, or whose flattery is the most servile. In the case of the Booth Charities at Salford, where upwards of £2,000 a year is distributed in cash, blankets, shirts, &c., great pains are taken to select only proper objects, by the examination of every recommendation and the restriction of the doles and gifts to persons over sixty years of age. Yet, out of two hundred successful applicants for a share of the charity, only one hundred and twenty could be considered as fit objects. It would appear, moreover, from Mr. Cumin's inquiries, that 67 per cent. of

the recipients would have obtained sufficient help to save them from the workhouse, if there had been no Booth Charity. To that extent, therefore, the charity simply supplanted private benevolence. The remaining 33 per cent. would, but for the charity, have come upon the parish. The actual benefit, therefore, conferred by these charities, was the preservation of the independence of these sixty-six applicants. This, be it remembered, is the case of an endowment, managed under exceptionally favourable conditions, which will operate only just so long as the trustees continue to exhibit unusual discrimination and caution. Of instances where the funds of charities are squandered by careless distribution, the Reports of the Charity Commissioners and of Mr. Cumin are so full that it is difficult to find many cases of a contrary character. An analysis of the list of the recipients of two important charities in Canterbury shows that convicted felons, brothel-house keepers, drunkards, and paupers received doles. Persons in good employment, also, were allowed to participate. At Bewdley, again, people of substance apply for and receive gifts of money from the Mill and Meadow Charities. The Williams Charity in Dorsetshire, originally founded for artificers of certain trades, is practically managed so as to include tradesmen. In Worcester and Coventry the dole charities are a recognised political agency. In Camberwell, which possesses considerable endowments, the innkeepers put on additional waiters whilst the distribution takes place. Lichfield suffers from an ill-conditioned surplus population attracted by its charities. The Mayor's charity at Manchester, amounting to £2,500 a year, is dispensed by nomination of the ratepayers. Though great precautions are taken against fraud, Mr. Cumin found that sometimes the nominator himself was recommended, or the nominee was his relative; in others the names mentioned were fictitious, or those of deceased persons. Beer-house keepers nominated their customers, middlemen recommended their lodgers for blankets and sheets, and so saved their own pockets; a son, himself an employer of labour, recommended his father; one man procured eight nominations for himself, the residences mentioned in seven of them being false. On the whole, the effect of the charity is to debase and pauperise the population, turning the recipients into improvident hypocrites or ungrateful rogues.

Bedford and Chester afford striking instances of the way in which these charities tend to sap the foundation of the independence of the recipients. The former town is extremely rich in charities. With the educational endowments we are not at present concerned, except to say that in our opinion they should no longer be restricted to the town of Bedford; we refer to the £3,000 a year now spent in marriage portions, apprentice fees, and doles to the poor. The doles, we find, have been found to foster pauperism to such an extent that they are not to be continued beyond the lives of the present holders; the

mar  
and  
colo  
in B  
sma  
set f  
him  
of a  
a ra  
simi  
foun  
trad  
com  
som  
trust  
pani  
decr  
the  
the  
time  
nece  
appe  
cipa  
amit  
purp  
for t  
char  
the  
O  
have  
base  
men  
A di  
sick  
are  
the  
wor  
Wel  
"dis  
A  
thro  
gifts  
are  
priv  
from  
a do

marriage portions are a direct incentive to improvident marriages; and the apprenticeship fees are a waste of money. "The Charity colours and determines," says Mr. Wright, "the whole life of many in Bedford. It bribes the father to marry for the sake of his wife's small portion; it takes the child from infancy and educates him in a set form; settles the course of his life by an apprentice fee, pauperises him by doles, and takes away a chief object of industry by the prospect of an almshouse." In fact, the Bedford charities set before each man a radically false view of the obligations and responsibilities of life. A similar result may be observed at Chester. In 1658 Owen Jones founded an endowment for the poor of the companies of that city, the trade of Chester being in those days restricted to the freemen of companies. Gradually the income of the charity increased, and as some difficulty was experienced in defining the term "poor," the trustees distributed their funds amongst all the members of the companies indiscriminately. Then the Court of Chancery stepped in, and decreed that the companies should be dealt with in rotation, and that the trustees should divide the money according to the necessities of the recipients. The charity is governed by this scheme at the present time. But, meanwhile, the conditions of existence which in 1658 necessitated the enrolment of each artisan in a company have disappeared; and of the twenty-four companies which annually participate in the distribution, not one, with the exception of the Goldsmiths, is anything more than a society kept together for the sole purpose of sharing in Jones's bounty. The charity no longer exists for the companies; the companies (Goldsmiths excepted) exist for the charity. All the members receive gifts; and amongst the recipients the Charity Inspector finds a felon, drunkards, and paupers.

Of the many imprudent restrictions which the founders of charities have sanctioned, none probably are so harmful as those which are based upon a religious test. In very many parishes there are endowments for the distribution of bread after service in the parish church. A direct incentive is thus offered to hypocrisy. The very old and sickly people, whose infirmities prevent their attendance at church, are excluded from the bounty; but all the worthless mendicants in the parish will gladly submit to the unwonted restraint of a place of worship for an hour or two for the sake of the subsequent dole. The Welsh, Mr. Hare tells us, stigmatise the recipients of such gifts as "disciples of the loaves."

A large class of charities, which has become practically useless through the altered conditions of society, is that which consists of gifts for apprenticing and for advancement in life. These charities are administered by municipal corporations, parochial authorities, or private trustees, and the amount of the fee payable in each case varies from £5 to £25. Now, formerly, the bond of apprenticeship was of a domestic as well as of a commercial kind. It gave the boy a home

and an industrial education. The apprentice lodged in the master's house, and was frequently treated on the same footing as the family. The employer's authority extended not only to his behaviour during hours of business, but to his habits and amusements during hours of leisure. Accordingly, in many instances, the apprentice regarded his master rather as a parent or guardian than as an employer. The industrious apprentice of a century or two ago, whose life was supposed to be at once an example and a stimulant, is always represented as an orderly and domesticated member of his employer's household, where he so ingratiates himself that he marries his master's daughter, succeeds to the business, and ultimately ends a virtuous career by becoming Lord Mayor. The fees which these charities dispensed were intended to provide the employer with some remuneration for accepting the responsibility of the supervision of the lad's existence, and the formation of his character. Now, however, the apprentice lives almost invariably with his parents or friends. His master is simply his employer, not his guardian. If the boy be decently educated, masters are glad to receive him as an apprentice without a fee. If, on the contrary, he be ignorant, he is likely to fall into the hands of a needy employer—probably a bad workman—to whom the £5 or £10 fee is a consideration. The fee becomes in fact a bribe, in return for which an indifferent master gets an indifferent apprentice, who is often treated as an errand boy. When these charities are best administered, they are generally confined to the children of the old servants of the trustees and their friends, or of small tradesmen connected with the municipal bodies. In many instances the Charity Inspectors discovered that "the fee was divided by an underhand arrangement between the parent and the master." Often the fund accumulates for want of opportunity to use it. In St. Dunstan's-in-the-West only three applications for fees had been made in six years. The apprenticeship endowment called Coventry's Charity at St. Antholin's, in the City of London, has not been made use of for many years, but has accumulated in the hands of the Merchant Tailors' Company. At Chipping Sodbury and Bingley, funds originally of very small amount have been of such slight service, that the surplus now reaches £660 and £400 respectively. At Aylesbury and Keighley, there being no opportunity of disposing of the charity in apprenticing, the income has, in the former case been applied in exhibitions for the grammar school, in the latter in doles.

Another class of endowments, which is to a great extent inoperative, is the loan charities. These were designed to assist young men of good character to start in life by lending them small sums of money, free of interest, on the security of sureties. The largest of these charities is that of Sir Thomas White, which dates from 1566, and is available in twenty-four cities or boroughs. The proceeds of the charity are to be lent to freemen, not more than thirty-five years of age,

in s  
bor  
sigh  
num  
less  
boo  
titic  
the  
to r  
and  
mar  
The  
to c  
can  
esta  
E  
itse  
foun  
deb  
who  
elev  
ham  
strie  
char  
him  
has  
suffi  
very  
loan  
sche  
Bur  
tion  
char  
wer  
F  
to a  
for  
butt  
And  
£30  
in-t  
be  
tide  
don  
ann  
prop

in sums ranging from £25 to £100 for ten years, without interest, the borrowers in each case finding two sureties for repayment. At first sight this would appear to be a harmless way of benefiting a large number of deserving persons. The truth is, however, that it is harmless because useless. Obviously the loan of £100 was a much greater boon in the sixteenth century than it is now. The intense competition which is so conspicuous a feature of the commerce of to-day, the diminution of profits resulting therefrom, the consequent tendency to restrict the trading operations of each district to a few great centres, and the spread of co-operation, unite in making it very difficult for a man to succeed in trade whose capital is hardly more than nominal. The loans are apparently not large enough to enable the journeyman to develop into the trader, while by the terms of the trust they cannot be applied to the relief of the temporary embarrassment of the established shopkeeper.

But whatever the causes of the failure of this charity, of the failure itself there can be no doubt. In Hereford, the Charity Inspector found that "the sureties are the persons ultimately obliged to pay the debt, and there does not appear any known instance of a borrower who has really benefited by the loan. Amongst the obligors in the eleven bonds, only one had risen in the world." Again, at Nottingham, there is a large surplus of the charity in the bank, and the restriction as to the age of the recipients is, in the administration of the charity, set aside. From Colchester, a well-informed correspondent, himself a trustee, writes to us that "the operation of the charity here has been most unsatisfactory. The needy freemen are unable to find sufficient sureties, and the money has been invested in Consols. In very many instances the borrowers have never repaid any part of the loan; in others, they have used the loan to embark in visionary schemes," and their sureties have suffered in consequence. At Burford, a loan charity has been applied by the corporation in donations to poor tradesmen. In Westminster, Mr. Fearon discovered a charity, the value of which was £30,000, and the advantages of which were trifling.

Finally, there are many endowments which it is simply impossible to apply in the mode prescribed by the founder. Such are charities for the payment of the old tax called fifteenths, for providing archery butts, leper hospitals, setting forth soldiers, &c. In the parish of St. Andrew's Undershaft, in the City of London, there is a fund of £30,000 which no one knows how to dispose of. In St. Dunstan's-in-the-East, a tobacconist left a field, the income from which was to be held in trust to supply six poor women with snuff at Barthelmy tide. The value of the field increased to an extent of which the donor could not have dreamed, and the absurdity of applying the annual rent according to the founder's will was so apparent that the property was allowed to accumulate. In this parish alone, the un-

appropriated charities amount to £3,000 a year. In another parish in London, the Rev. Mr. Rogers discovered a fund which had lain untouched for centuries. No one knew how to carry out the intentions of the founder, for he had bequeathed the charity for the destruction of "ladybirds on Cornhill." Again, we read of a testator who had married unhappily. His wedding day, he said, was the most miserable day of his life; the day of his wife's death, his most enjoyable. Accordingly, he left his property in trust under these conditions—that on every anniversary of his wedding day the parish bells should ring a muffled peal, while on every anniversary of his wife's death, they should be rung merrily all day. We cannot discover whether this founder's griefs and joys are still celebrated as he desired, but his gift has attained considerable proportions, and is accumulating.

We have thus endeavoured to present a few salient examples of the various classes of charities which it is proposed to apply to purposes of education, by means of the Endowed Schools Commissioners. The propriety—say, the necessity of thus appropriating them, is based not only upon the fact that, as at present dispensed, they are doing positive injury, but upon the consideration that, apart from an agency specially constituted for the object, there exists no tribunal adapted to deal with them. The action of the Court of Chancery is tedious, unsatisfactory, and expensive. "As a general rule," says Mr. Senior, "the instant a charity not exceeding £30 a-year becomes the object of a suit, it is gone; one of £60 a-year is reduced one-half; one of a £100, one-third. The prudent friend of such a charity will submit to see it mismanaged to any extent short of the destruction of all its utility rather than risk its ultimate annihilation by the ruinous protection of the court." In the course of years, moreover, the court has remodelled many trusts. In but few instances, however, have the schemes suggested been as beneficial as they might have been; in many, they have introduced evils almost as serious as those they tried to remedy. The court acts in accordance with the doctrine of Cypres, that is, it endeavours, in reforming a trust, to conform as closely as possible to the expressed intentions of the founder. But the operation of the doctrine is partial and capricious. In practice, it means that many of the restrictions which were found pernicious in the old trust, are retained in an altered form in the new, or are replaced by others nearly as bad. Exeter, for example, possesses a most abundant supply of charitable endowments of all sorts. Education, apprenticing, marriage dowries, loans, doles of bread, money, and clothing, church repairing, baths, wash-houses, almshouses, food for prisoners, and shrouds for condemned felons, are all provided for. The Court of Chancery has been called in to reduce this heterogeneous mass of benevolence to something like order. But the result is, in Mr. Cumin's words, "that the trustees are now as much hampered by the restrictions of the court as they were originally hampered by the

terms of the original foundations." The failure of the intervention of the court is traceable to the inadequacy of the *Cyprès* doctrine to the necessities of the case. Again, what help will this doctrine afford towards the remodelling of a charity given, for example, for the payment of a tax now obsolete, or for the redemption of Barbary captives, or for many other objects which exist no longer? In practice, the court, in the effort to render the charity of some advantage, frequently sanctions schemes which diverge as widely from the original trust as would the application of the funds to education, while yet, in its efforts to move in the orbit of the founder's intentions, it permits the continuance of glaring abuses. The fact is, the court cannot look at the subject from the stand-point of social wants or public policy. The scope of its action is limited by the area of the particular charity with which it may have to deal, the principle on which it acts is necessarily imperfect and narrow. What is wanted is a complete alteration of these charities, which shall be neither fragmentary, partial, or local. It is fortunately not needful now to accumulate arguments against the inviolability of founders' designs. To object to revision on such a ground is in effect to sanction the idea that a founder was vain enough to imagine that he could foresee the requirements of all future ages, and credulous enough to believe that his trustees in a remote future would dispense his bounty with all his own zeal and discretion. Why not rather credit the founder with that amount of enlightenment which would have stimulated him, if living now, to have desired the readjustment of his benevolence if it no longer resulted in practical good.

There are, however, three instances in which the Court of Chancery has, in opportune defiance of the *Cyprès* doctrine, applied the proceeds of charities to educational objects, and the result has been in each case so satisfactory that we will mention them. The parochial authorities of St. Clement Danes hold certain lands in trust for the purpose, according to the original grant, of paying the profits in alms to twelve poor people. The property had gradually increased in value, until in 1840 the annual income amounted to £3,957, 10s., and there was, in addition, a sum of £21,113 in the Three per cents. If, therefore, the total income had been divided according to the foundation, each of the twelve recipients would have had £380 a year! But, between 1840 and 1860, the Court of Chancery sanctioned the appropriation of the charity to the building of new grammar and infant schools, and to the aiding of existing parochial schools. With unusual wisdom, the court also established a middle-class school for girls, which, with the others, are pronounced by Mr. Fearon to be well-taught and carefully-conducted institutions. It is credible that, if the founder were now alive, he would wish to see his bounty expended in the instruction of the children in his parish; it is not credible that he would wish to bestow nearly four hundred a year on twelve people.

Again, the Whitechapel Foundation Commercial School, and the Stationers' School, both good schools of the second grade, had a similar origin. The one derives its funds from the proceeds of five charities originally granted for doles after divine service and on Christmas day, and for poor people, at the discretion of the minister. The other is the offspring of an endowment, the objects of which, as laid down by the granter, were, "doles, and the support of a preacher at St. Paul's Cross." The legitimate application of the latter, according to the doctrine of Cypres, would be, we suppose, to hand it over to the Bishop of London's Fund.

Nor has Parliament been more successful in dealing with charities than the Court of Chancery. Every scheme for the revision of an endowment is sure to excite the hostility of some person or other; and in the teeth of local opposition, however unworthy its motives, it is next to impossible to carry a Bill. But even if these difficulties be overcome, and the Bill passed, the revised scheme, adapted rather to reconcile contending parties, or to adhere to antiquated precedents, than to apply the funds of the charity in the wisest manner, is often deficient in completeness and wisdom. Thus, in the revision of the Jarvis charity, every one of the reforms which ought to have been made, was either omitted, or very inadequately provided for. The restriction of the area of the charity, the deficiency of cottages, the excessive doles, were left practically untouched. Again, in the case of Jones's charity at Chester, so long as the companies exist, no scheme proposed by the Charity Commissioners would have the slightest chance of obtaining legislative sanction in the teeth of the opposition it would be sure to encounter. Yet, as we have mentioned, these companies perform no functions whatever except to share among them the proceeds of Jones's gift. In the present state of the law, the evils resulting from this foundation are virtually irremediable.

We cannot but consider, then, the contemplated application of these charities to educational needs as a great step in advance, for the operations of the Endowed Schools' Commissioners will be liable to none of the drawbacks which impede the action of the Court of Chancery or of Parliament. Dealing, as they will, with each endowment, after minute investigation of the educational requirements of each locality; emancipated from the legal impediments which have obstructed all previous attempts at reform; assured that their intervention will be effectual and will not merely result in frittering away the income of the endowment in litigation, the commissioners will be able to carry out the intention of the founder—the benefit of the poor—far more perfectly than by any scheme which the doctrine of Cypres could suggest, or which the antagonism of clashing interests would approve. Moreover, numbers of endowments too small individually to be the subject of revision, will find a suitable place in the general educational scheme of each county or district. They may

afford to meritorious poor boys the means of rising to a higher cultivation. They may stimulate and improve the schools over a considerable area by offering openings to their best scholars. In some cases they may possibly be made technical schools, to be filled with picked scholars. The schemes which the commissioners have prepared, afford opportune examples of the important uses these charities may be made to subserve. Up to the time at which we are writing, six schemes have been announced, and they include charities founded for all the more important objects to which we have alluded. Lady Mico's fund for apprenticing, at Fairford, Gloucester; Acham and Freeman's charity for doles, at Northampton; Waterworth's gift for the relief of insolvent debtors, at Liverpool; and the Bull Close charity, at Whittington, in Derby, are all to be appropriated in aid of the endowed schools of the parishes to which they belong. The commissioners, while dealing with these endowments at once, hold themselves at liberty to reconsider this application of them whenever they shall be prepared to frame a general scheme for the management of the endowed schools in each district. The two remaining schemes refer to Lady Boothby's charity for the poor of Micheldever, Hants; and Carpenter's loan-fund, in the ward of Bread Street, London—a locality which has been much deteriorated by the charities of which it is possessed. In the former case, the commissioners contemplate the erection of a primary school, and the creation of exhibitions for deserving scholars of the parish; in the latter, they propose to apply £300 a year of the income of the foundation, in exhibitions, either for boys or girls residing within the ward. There can, we think, be no better appropriation of these endowments than that which renders them the means of placing within the reach of the poorest, the opportunity for obtaining a higher education. Primary instruction is now admitted to be a right which even the poorest and most degraded may claim from the State. All, however, have no right to a higher education, because all are not fitted to acquire it. But those whose natural tastes and talents testify to their fitness for advanced instruction, should receive every assistance which the State can bestow. These endowments, applied in the shape of exhibitions, afford an invaluable agency for the purpose.

It is because we believe that such an application of these charities would be a great benefit to the nation that we regret to observe one condition by which the commissioners are fettered. In no case can they appropriate an endowment without the consent of the governing body. This modification, introduced into the Endowed Schools Bill by Mr. Walpole, will, we fear, sadly impair its efficiency. Probably the trustees who have most abused the trust, will be the most tenacious in retaining their hold on it. For just as the claims of many of the recipients of the charities are rather the offspring of their sloth than of their want, so the management of the charity is often

coveted by trustees, not so much from motives of benevolence as of love of authority and importance. But, in some instances, where trustees are thoroughly persuaded of the necessity for a reappropriation of the funds they distribute, they are unwilling to acquiesce in any change because of the odium they would incur. Instances are not wanting where threats of personal violence have been used towards the conscientious reformer of a charity. One can imagine how unpopular a clergyman, for example, would become, who should lay himself open to a charge of having withdrawn the dole of money or of kind which had for years demoralized his parish. The sycophancy which the participants had formerly exhibited towards him, would be the exact measure of the hate his conduct would now excite. Not even the strictest regard for vested interests, nor the repeated assurance that the charity would be applied towards the education of the recipient's family, would serve to allay altogether the clamour begotten of disappointed hopes and enervated character. The commissioners, however, acting on their own responsibility, and independently of the governors, would be unaffected by any odium their measures might arouse, while they would yet form a convenient scapegoat for the local trustee. On the other hand, the powers which, under the Act, the governors possess, of making objections, to which the commissioners are bound to listen, to the proposed scheme; of themselves submitting an alternative scheme; and of ultimately appealing to the Queen in Council; appear to afford every possible precaution against the infliction of individual hardship, or the neglect of a due regard to vested interests. It is just that the governors should be able to criticize, and, where necessary, modify, the arrangements of the commissioners; it is not just that they should be able to prohibit those arrangements altogether.

ALFRED S. HARVEY.

## HANNAH.

A NOVEL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "JOHN HALIFAX, GENTLEMAN."

---

### CHAPTER VI.

HANNAH was fond of the Moat-House; in the way that we are often fond of people thrown temporarily in our way, thinking: "I should like you if I knew you," but well aware that this will never happen. Often, as in her walks she passed by the grey old walls, she could quite understand Mr. Rivers's strong clinging to the only home he ever knew, the resting-place of his family for generations. She sympathised keenly in his admiration for its quaint nooks and corners within—its quainter aspect without; for the moat had been drained, and turned into a terraced garden, and the old drawbridge into a bridge leading to it; so that it was the most original and interesting house possible.

Miss Thelluson would have gone there often, but for a conviction that its inhabitants did not approve of this. Wide as their circle was, and endless as were their entertainments, it was not what Hannah called a hospitable house. That is, it opened its doors wide at stated times; gave the most splendid dinners and balls; but if you went in accidentally or uninvited, you were received both by the family and servants with civil surprise. Hannah was, once calling of an evening after an early dinner; when the effort to get her an egg to her tea seemed to throw the whole establishment, from the butler downwards, into such dire confusion, that she never owned to being "hungry" at the Moat-House again.

Nor was it a place to bring a child to. Rosie, always good at home, was sure to be naughty at the Moat-House; and then grandmamma and aunts always told papa of it, and papa came back and complained to Aunt Hannah; and Aunt Hannah was sometimes sorry, sometimes indignant. So the end was that she and the child never went there unless specially invited; and that paradise of most little people—"grandmamma's house" and "grandmamma's garden"—was to Rosie Rivers a perfect blank.

Nevertheless, Aunt Hannah never looked at the lovely old house without a sense of tender regret; for it was so very lovely, and might have been so dear. Perhaps it would be, one day, when Rosie, its heir's sole heiress, reigned as mistress there. A change which another ten or fifteen years were likely enough to bring about, as Sir Austin was an old man, and young Austin, the hapless eldest son, would never inherit anything. Everybody knew, though nobody said

it, that the Rev. Bernard Rivers would be in reality his father's successor. Even Lady Rivers, who was a rich young widow when she became Sir Austin's wife, and had a comfortable jointure house in another county, openly referred to that time, and as openly regretted that her step-son did not turn his thoughts to a second marriage.

"But he will soon, of course; and you ought to take every opportunity of suggesting it to him, Miss Thelluson; for, in his position, it is really his duty, and he says one of the great advantages you are to him is, that you always keep him up to his duty."

To these remarks Hannah seldom answered more than a polite smile. She made a point of never discussing Mr. Rivers's marriage: first, because if his family had no delicacy on the subject, she had; and, second, because every day convinced her more and more that he was sincere when he told her he had no present intention of the kind.

Yet he was perfectly cheerful now—not exactly in his old buoyant fashion, but in a contented, equable way, that Hannah, at least, liked much better. Theirs was a cheerful house, too. "Use hospitality without grudging" was Bernard's motto; and he used it, as she once suggested to him, principally to those "who cannot repay thee." So the House on the Hill—the clergyman's house—was seldom empty, but had always bed and board at the service of any who required it, or enjoyed it. Still, this kind of hospitality, simple as it was, kept Hannah very busy always. Not that she objected to it: nay, she rather liked it; it roused her dormant social qualities, made her talk more and look brighter and better—indeed some people congratulated her on having grown ten years younger since she came to Easterham. She felt so herself, at any rate.

Besides this outside cheerfulness in their daily life, she and her brother-in-law, since their quarrel and its making-up, seemed to have got on together better than ever. Her mind was settled on the marriage question; she dreaded no immediate changes, and he seemed to respect her all the more for having "shown fight" on the question of Grace Dixon—alas, Mrs. Dixon no longer now!—she took off her wedding-ring, and was called plain Grace; she had no right to any other name.

"And my boy has no name either," she said once, with a pale, patient face, when, the worst of her sorrow having spent itself, she went about her duties, outwardly resigned.

"Never mind!" Hannah replied, with a choke in her throat. "He must make himself one." And then they laid the subject aside, and discussed it no more.

Neither did she and her brother-in-law open it up again. It was one of the sore inevitables, the painful awkwardnesses, best not talked about. In truth—in the position in which she and Mr. Rivers stood to one another—how could they talk about it?

The Rivers's family did sometimes; they had a genius for discussing unpleasant topics. But happily the approaching marriage of Mr. Melville and Adeline annihilated this one.

"U  
you k  
"And  
was br  
Han  
Mrs. L  
brough  
though  
Ade  
great  
Melvill  
about  
fact, l  
were p  
suppos  
ever,  
hands  
to Ade  
out of  
Ber  
I only  
my br  
one's  
you fi  
Han  
she of  
sider  
"peo  
all th  
tried,  
the m  
that s  
"I  
to Ro  
they  
childr  
can b  
best,  
—not  
you a  
discip  
"N  
"V  
dinne  
dutie  
some  
vor

"Under the circumstances nobody could speak to him about it, you know; it might hurt his feelings," said the happy bride-elect. "And pray keep Grace out of his way, for he knows her well; she was brought up in his family. A very nice family, are they not?"

Hannah allowed they were. She sometimes watched the dowager Mrs. Melville among her tribe of step-daughters, whom she had brought up, and who returned her care with unwonted tenderness,—thought of poor Grace, and—sighed.

Adeline's marriage was carried out without delay. It seemed a great satisfaction to everybody, and a relief likewise. Young Mr. Melville, who was rather of a butterfly temperament, had fluttered about this nosegay of pretty girls for the last ten years. He had, in fact, loved through the family—beginning with the eldest, when they were playfellows, then transferring his affections to Helen, and being supposed to receive a death-blow on her engagement; which, however, he speedily recovered, to carry on a long flirtation with the handsome Bertha; finally, to everybody's wonder, he settled down to Adeline, who was the quietest, the least pretty, and the only one out of the four who really loved him.

Bertha was vexed at first, but soon took consolation. "After all, I only cared to flirt with him, and I can do it just as well when he is my brother-in-law. Brothers are so stupid; but a brother-in-law, of one's own age, will be so very convenient. Miss Thelluson, don't you find it so?"

Hannah scarcely answered this—one of the many odd things which she often heard said at the Moat-House. However, she did not consider it her province to notice them. The Riverses were Bernard's "people," as he affectionately called them, and his loving eye saw all their faults very small, and their virtues very large. Hannah tried, for his sake, to do the same. Only, the better she knew them the more she determined on one thing—to hold firmly to her point, that she, and she alone, should have the bringing-up of little Rosie.

"I daresay you will think me very conceited," she said one night to Rosie's father—the winter evenings were drawing in again, and they were sitting together talking, in that peaceful hour after "the children are asleep"—"but I do believe that I, her mother's sister, can bring up Rosie better than anybody else. First, because I love her best, she being of my own blood; secondly, because not all women—not even all mothers—have the real motherly heart. Shall I tell you a story I heard to-day, and Lady Rivers instanced it as 'right discipline?' But it is only a baby-story; it may weary you."

"Nothing ever wearies me that concerns Rosie—and you."

"Well, then, there is an Easterham lady—you meet her often at dinner-parties—young and pretty, and capital at talking of maternal duties. She has a little girl of six, and the little girl did wrong in some small way, and was told to say she was sorry. 'I have said

it, mamma, seventy-times-seven—to myself.' (A queer speech; but children do say such queer things sometimes; Rosie does already). 'But you must say it to me,' said mamma. 'I won't,' said the child. And then the mother stood, beating and shaking her, at intervals, for nearly an hour. At last the little thing fell into convulsions of sobbing. 'Fetch me the water-jug, and I'll pour it over her.' (Which she did, wetting her through.) 'This is the way I conquer my children.' Now," said Hannah Thelluson, with flashing eyes, "if any strange woman were ever to try to 'conquer' my child——"

"Keep yourself quiet, Hannah," said Mr. Rivers, half smiling, and gently patting her hand. "No 'strange woman' shall ever interfere between you and Rosie."

"And you will promise never to send her to school, at Paris or anywhere else, as Lady Rivers proposed the other day, when she is old enough. Oh, papa" (she sometimes called him "papa," as a compromise between "Bernard," which he wished, and "Mr. Rivers") "I think I should go frantic if anybody were to take my child away from me."

"Nobody ever shall," said he, earnestly pressing her hand, which he had not yet let go. Then, after a pause, and a troubled stirring of the fire—his habit when he was perplexed—he added, "Hannah, do you ever look into the future at all?"

"Rosie's future? Yes, often."

"No; your own."

"I think—not much," Hannah replied, after slight hesitation, and trying to be as truthful as she could. "When first I came here I was doubtful how our plan would answer; but it has answered admirably. I desire no change. I am only too happy in my present life."

"Perfectly happy? Are you quite sure?"

"Quite sure."

"Then I suppose I ought to be."

Yet he sighed, and very soon after he rose with some excuse about a sermon he had to look over; went into his study, whence, contrary to his custom, he did not emerge for the rest of the evening.

Hannah sat alone, and rather uncomfortable. Had she vexed him in any way? Was he not glad she declared herself happy, since, of necessity, his kindness helped to make her so? For months now there had never come a cloud between them. Their first quarrel was also their last. By this time they had, of course, grown perfectly used to one another's ways; their life flowed on in its even course—a pleasant river, busy as it was smooth. Upon its surface floated peacefully that happy, childish life, developing into more beauty every day. Rosie was not exactly a baby now; and often when she trotted along the broad garden walk, holding tightly papa's hand on one side and auntie's on the other, there came into Hannah's mind that lovely picture of Tennyson's:—

That v  
to—w  
Rosie?  
stern,  
those  
She ne  
her tru  
"I

Lady L  
I am q  
So s  
new-b  
wings  
more t

The  
comfor  
here w  
beauty  
little  
spring  
so tha  
seem  
be dis

Eve  
in-law  
quite  
And t  
she th  
done  
restrai  
had la  
gives  
friend  
than t  
to a g  
and I

Wh  
to tak  
there  
Aunt  
An  
were  
influe  
if ind

"And in their double love secure  
The little maiden walked demure,  
Pacing with downward eyelids pure."

That was the picture which she saw in a vision, and had referred to—why had it vexed the father? Did he think she "spoiled" Rosie? But love never spoils any child, and Aunt Hannah could be stern, too, if necessary. She made as few laws as possible; but those she did make were irrevocable, and Rosie knew this already. She never cried for a thing twice over—and oh how touching was her trust, how patient her resigning!

"I don't know how far you will educate your little niece," wrote Lady Dunsmore, in the early days of Hannah's willing task; "but I am quite certain she will educate you."

So she did; and Hannah continually watched in wonder the little new-born soul, growing as fast as the body, and spreading out its wings daily in farther and fairer flights, learning, she knew not how, more things than she had taught it, or could teach.

Then Rosie comforted her aunt so—with the same sweet, dumb comfort that Hannah used to get from flowers and birds and trees. But here was a living flower, which God had given her to train up into beauty, blessing her with twice the blessedness she gave. In all her little household worries, Rosie's unconscious and perpetual well-spring of happiness soothed Hannah indescribably, and never more so than in some bitter days which followed that day, when Mr. Rivers seemed to have suddenly returned to his old miserable self, and to be dissatisfied with everything and everybody.

Even herself. She could not guess why; but sometimes her brother-in-law actually scolded her, or, what was worse, he scolded Rosie; quite needlessly, for the child was an exceedingly good child. And then Aunt Hannah's indignation was roused. More than once she thought of giving him a severe lecture, as she had occasionally done before, and he declared it did him good. But a certain diffidence restrained her. What right indeed had she to "pitch into him," as he had laughingly called it, when they were no blood relations?—if blood gives the right of fault-finding, which some people suppose. Good friends as she and Mr. Rivers were, Hannah scrupled to claim more than the rights of friendship, which scarcely justify a lady in saying to a gentleman in his own house, "You are growing a perfect bear, and I would much rather have your room than your company."

Which was the truth. Just now, if she had not had Rosie's nursery to take refuge in, and Rosie's little bosom to fly to, burying her head there oftentimes, and drying her wet eyes upon the baby-pinafore, Aunt Hannah would have had a sore time of it.

And yet she was so sorry for him—so sorry! If the old cloud were permanently to return, what should she do? What possible influence had she over him? She was neither his mother nor sister, if indeed either of those ties permanently affect a man who has once

been married, and known the closest sympathy, the strongest influence a man can know. Many a time, when he was very disagreeable, her heart sank down like lead; she would carry Rosie sorrowfully out of papa's way, lest she should vex him, or be made naughty by him; conscious as she clasped the child to her bosom, of that dangerous feeling which men sometimes rouse in women—even fathers in mothers—that their children are much pleasanter company than themselves.

Poor Bernard! poor Hannah! Perhaps the former should have been wiser, the latter more quick-sighted. But men are not always Solons; and Hannah was a rather peculiar sort of woman. She had so completely taken her own measure and settled her voluntary destiny, that it never occurred to her she was not quite the old maid she thought herself, or that, like other mortal creatures, her lot, as well as her individuality, was liable to be modified by circumstances. When Bernard once told her she was a well-liked person, growing very popular at Easterham, she smiled, rather pleased than not; but when he hinted that an elderly rector, a rich widower, who had lately taken to visiting constantly at the House on the Hill, did not visit there on his account, but hers, Miss Thelluson at first looked innocently uncomprehending, then annoyed, as if her brother-in-law had made an unseemly jest. He never made it again. And soon afterwards, either from her extreme coldness of manner, or some other cause, the rector suddenly vanished, and was no more seen.

Presently, and just at the time when she would have been most glad of visitors to cheer up her brother-in-law, their house seemed to grow strangely empty. Invitations ceased, even those at the Moat-House being fewer and more formal. And in one of her rare visits there, Lady Rivers had much annoyed her by dragging in—apropos of Adeline's marriage, and the great advantage it was for girls to get early settled in life—a pointed allusion to the aforesaid rector, and his persistent attentions.

"Which of course everybody noticed, my dear. Everybody notices everything in Easterham. And allow me to say that if he does mean anything, you may count on my best wishes. Indeed, I think, all things considered, to marry him would be the very best thing you could do."

"Thank you; but I have not the slightest intention of doing it."

"Then, do you never mean to marry at all?"

"Probably not," replied Hannah, trying hard to keep up that air of smiling politeness, which she had hitherto found as repellent as a crystal wall against impertinent intrusiveness. "But, really, these things cannot possibly interest any one but myself. Not even benevolent Easterham."

"Pardon me. Benevolent Easterham is taking far too much interest in the matter, and in yourself too, I am sorry to say,"

observe  
business

And  
guests,  
remain

This  
greater  
Bernar

self ag  
to the  
lutely  
making

wards  
Miss T  
go out

"Y

Moat-

touch

Moat-

showe

"C

Hann

times

pleas

silent

smoo

and t

into

bright

the i

"

subj

mise

a nig

thin

"

to f

"P

ima

We

mor

"

"

chi

bed

Isn

observed Lady Rivers mysteriously. "But, of course, it is no business of mine."

And with a displeased look, the old lady disappeared to other guests, giving Hannah unmistakably "the cold shoulder" for the remainder of the evening.

This did not afflict her much, for she was used to it. Of far greater consequence was it, when, a little while after, she saw by Bernard's looks that his spirits had risen, and he was almost his old self again. It always pleased him when his sister-in-law was invited to the Moat-House, and made herself agreeable there, as she resolutely did. The habit of accepting a man's bread and salt, and then making oneself disagreeable in the eating of it, or abusing it afterwards, was a phase of fashionable morality not yet attained to by Miss Thelluson. She did not care to visit much; but when she did go out, she enjoyed herself as much as possible.

"Yes, it has been a very pleasant evening; quite lively—for the Moat-House," she would have added, but checked herself. It was touching to see Bernard's innocent admiration of everything at the Moat-House. The only occasions when it vexed her was when they showed so little appreciation of him.

"Oh, why can he not always be as good as he is to-night!" thought Hannah, when, as they walked home together, which they did sometimes of fine evenings instead of ordering the carriage, he talked pleasantly and cheerfully the whole way. They passed through the silent, shut-up village, and up the equally silent hill-road, to the smooth "down" at its top. There the extreme quietness and loneliness, and the mysterious beauty of the frosty starlight, seemed to soothe him into a more earnest mood, imparting something of the feeling which bright winter nights always gave to Hannah—that sense of nearness to the invisible, which levels all human griefs, and comforts all mortal pain.

"Perhaps, after all," said he, when they had been speaking on this subject, "it does not so very much matter whether one is happy or miserable during one's short life here; or one is inclined to feel so on a night like this, and talking together as you and I do now. The only thing of moment seems to be to have patience and do one's duty."

"I think it does matter," Hannah answered; but gently, so as not to frighten away the good angel which she rejoiced to see returning. "People do their duty much better when they are happy. I cannot imagine a God who could accept only the sacrifices of the miserable. We must all suffer, less or more; but I never would suffer one whit more, or longer, than I could help."

"Would you not?"

"No; nor would I make others suffer. What do you think the child said to me yesterday, when I was removing her playthings at bed-time? I suppose I looked grave, for she said, 'Poor Tannie! Isn't Tannie sorry to take away Rosie's toys?' Tannie was sorry,

and would gladly have given them all back again if she could. Don't you think," and Hannah lifted her soft, grey truthful eyes to the winter sky, "that if Tannie feels thus, so surely must God?"

Mr. Rivers said nothing; but he pressed slightly the arm within his, and they walked on, taking the "sweet counsel together," which is the best privilege of real friends. It was like old days come back again, and Hannah felt so glad.

"Now you may perceive," Bernard said after a little, apropos of nothing, "why the charming young ladies who come about my sisters, and whom they think I don't admire half enough, do not attract me as I suppose they ought to do. They might have done so once, before I had known sorrow; but now they seem to me so 'young,' shallow, and small. One half of me—the deepest half—they never touch; nor do my own people neither. For instance, the things we have been talking of to-night I should never dream of speaking about to anybody—except you."

"Thank you," replied Hannah, gratified.

Had she thought herself bound to tell the full truth, she might have confessed that there was a time when she, on her part, thought Mr. Rivers as he thought these girls, "young, shallow, and small." She did not now. Either he had altered very much, or she had much misjudged him. Probably both was the case. He had grown older, graver, more earnest. She did not feel the least like his mother now; he was often much wiser than she, and she gladly owned this. It would have relieved her honest mind to own likewise a few other trifles on which she had been egregiously mistaken. But in some things, and especially those which concerned herself and her own feelings, Hannah was still a very shy woman.

"Not that I have a word to say against those charming girls," continued he, relapsing into his gay mood. "No doubt they are very charming, the Miss Melvilles and the rest.

" 'He that loves a rosy cheek,  
And a coral lip admires,'

may find enough to admire in them. Only—only—you remember the last verse?" And he repeated it; with a tender intonation that rather surprised Hannah—

" 'But a true and constant mind,  
Gentle thoughts and calm desires,  
Hearts in equal love combined,  
Kindle never-dying fires.'"

That is my theory of loving—is it yours?"

"I should fancy it is most people's who have ever deeply thought about the matter."

"Another theory I have, too," he went on, 'apparently half in earnest, half in jest, "that the passion comes to different people, and at different times of their lives, in very contrary ways. Some 'fall' in

love as I did, at first sight, with my lost darling,"—he paused, a full minute. "Others walk into love deliberately, with their eyes open; while a few creep into it blindfold, and know not where they are going till the bandage drops, and then——"

"And which of these do you suppose was the case of Adeline and Mr. Melville?"

"Good heavens! I was not thinking of Adeline and Mr. Melville at all."

He spoke with such needless acerbity that Hannah actually laughed, and then begged his pardon, which seemed to offend him only the more. She did not know how to take him, his moods were so various and unaccountable. But whatever they were, or whatever he was, she felt bound to put up with him; nay, she was happier with him in any mood than when far apart from him, as when he had held himself aloof from her of late.

"You are very cross to me," said she simply, "but I do not mind it. I know you have many things to vex you, only do please try to be as good as you can. And you might as well as not be good to me."

"Be good to you!"

"Yes; for though I may vex you sometimes, as I seem to have done lately, I do not really mean any harm."

"Harm! Poor Hannah! Why, you wouldn't harm a fly. And yet——" he stopped suddenly, took both her hands, and looked her hard in the face, "there are times when I feel as if I hated the very sight of you."

Hannah stood aghast. Such unkind, causelessly unkind words! Hate her—why? Because she reminded him of his wife! And yet, except for a certain occasional "family" look, no two sisters could be more unlike than she and Rosa. Even were it not so, what a silly, nay, cruel reason for disliking her! And why had not the dislike shown itself months ago, when he seemed to prize her all the more for belonging to the departed one, whom he still fondly called his "lost darling."

Miss Thelluson could not understand it at all. She was first startled; then inexpressibly pained. The tears came, and choked her. She would have run away if she could; but as she could not, she walked on, saying nothing, for she literally had not a word to say.

Mr. Rivers walked after her. "I beg your pardon. I have spoken wildly, ridiculously. You must forgive. You see, I am not such a calm, even temperament as you. Oh, Hannah, do forgive me. I did not mean what I said—I did not indeed!"

"What did you mean then?"

A question which some people, well versed in the science which Mr. Rivers had just been so eloquently discussing, may consider foolish in the extreme, showing Hannah to have been, not merely the least

self-conscious, but the most purblind of her sex. She was neither. But there are natures so exceedingly single-minded and straightforward, that what seems to them not a right or fitting thing to be done, they no more think of doing themselves, or of suspecting others of doing, than of performing that celebrated feat of "jumping over the moon." Besides, her idea of herself was, in many ways, as purely imaginary as her idea of her brother-in-law. The known, notable fact, that "hate" is often only the agonised expression of a very opposite feeling, never once suggested itself to the innocent mind of Hannah Thelluson.

They had by this time reached their own gate. Her hand was on the latch, not reluctantly. He took it off.

"Don't go in—not just this moment, when you are displeased with me. The night is so fine, and there is nobody about." (What would that matter? Hannah thought.) "Just walk a few steps farther, while I say to you something which I have had on my mind to say for weeks past :—a message, no, not a message, but a sort of commission from a friend of mine."

By his hesitation, his extreme awkwardness and uncomfortableness of manner, Hannah guessed directly what it was. "Et tu, Brute!" she could have bitterly said, remembering the annoyance to which she had been just subjected by Lady Rivers; whom she had seen afterwards in close conclave with Bernard. Had he, then, been enlisted on the same side—of the obnoxious rector? Well, what matter? She had better hear all, and have done with it.

But there was delay, and for fully ten minutes; first by Bernard's silence, out of which she was determined not to help him in the least; and secondly, by their encountering a couple out walking like themselves, the village apothecary and the village milliner,—known well to be lovers,—who looked equally shy at being met by, and astonished at meeting, their clergyman and his sister-in-law out on the hill at that late hour. Mr. Rivers himself looked much vexed, and hastily proposed turning homeward, as if forgetting altogether what he had to say, till they once more reached the gate.

"Just one turn in the garden, Hannah—I must deliver my message, and do my duty, as Lady Rivers says I ought. I beg your pardon," he added formally, "it is trenching on delicate ground, but my friend, Mr. Morecomb, has asked me confidentially to tell him whether you have any objection to his visiting our house."

"Our house? Certainly not."

"But the house means you,—visits paid to you, with a certain definite end,—in plain terms, he wishes to marry you."

"And has confided that intention to you, and to all Easterham! How very kind! But would it not have been kinder to put the question to me himself, instead of making it public through a third party?"

"If by the 'third party' you mean me, I assure you, I was no

willing party; and also, that I have sedulously kept the secret forced upon me. Even to-night, when Lady Rivers was questioning me on the subject, I was careful not to let her suspect, in the smallest degree, that there was any foundation for the report beyond Easterham gossip at Morecamb's frequent visits. I kept my own counsel, ay, and submitted to be rated roundly for my indifference to your interests, and told that I was hindering you from making a good marriage. Is it so?"

"You ought to have known me better than to suppose I should ever make a 'good' marriage; which means, in Lady Rivers's vocabulary, a marriage of convenience. She is very kind, to take my affairs so completely into her own hands. I am deeply indebted to her—and to you."

The tone was so bitter and satirical, so unlike herself, that Bernard turned to look at her in the starlight,—the pale pure face, neither young nor old, which, he sometimes said, never would be either younger or older, because no wear and tear of human passion troubled its celestial peace.

"I have offended you, I see. Can it be possible that ——"

"Nothing is impossible, apparently. But I should have supposed that you yourself would have been the first to put down all remarks of this kind; aware that it was, at least, highly improbable I could have any feeling concerning Mr. Morecamb—unless it was resentment at his having made me a public talk in this way."

"He could not help it, I suppose."

"He ought to have helped it. Any man who really loves a woman will hide her under a bushel, so to speak,—shelter her from the faintest breath of gossip, take any trouble, any blame even, upon himself, rather than let her be talked about. At least, that is how I should feel if I were a man and loved a woman. But I don't understand you men—less and less the more I know of you. You seem to see things in a different light, and live after a different pattern from what we women do."

"That is only too true,—the more the pity," said Mr. Rivers, sighing. "But as to gossip: the man might not be able to prevent it. There might be circumstances—— What do you think Morecamb ought to have done?"

Hannah thought a moment. "He should have held his tongue till he knew his own mind fully, or guessed mine. Then he should have put the question to me direct, and I would have answered it the same, and also held my tongue. Half the love-miseries in the world arise, not from the love itself, but from people's talking about it. I say to all my young friends who fall in love, whether happily or unhappily,—'Keep it to yourself: whatever happens, hold your tongue.'"

"Oracular advice—as if from a prophetess superior to all these human weaknesses," said Bernard bitterly. "A pity it was not given

in time to poor Mr. Morecamb. What do you dislike in him—his age?"

"No; it is generally a good thing for the man to be older than the woman—even much older."

"His being a widower, then?"

"Not at all; but—" and Hannah stopped, as indignant as if she had really loved Mr. Morecamb. That her brother-in-law should be pleading the cause of a gentleman who wanted to marry her, or that any gentleman should be wanting to marry her, seemed equally extraordinary. She could have laughed at the whole matter, had she not felt so strangely, absurdly angry. She stood—twirling her hands in and out of her muff, and patting with fierce little feet the frosty ground, and waited for Mr. Rivers to speak next. He did so at length, very formally.

"I have, then, to convey to my friend a simple negative, and say that you desire his visits here to cease?"

"Not if he is your friend, and you wish them to continue. What right have I to shut the door upon any of your guests? My position is most awkward, most uncomfortable. Why did not you spare me this? If you had tried, I think—I think you might."

It was a woman's involuntary outcry of pain, and appeal for protection—until she remembered she was making it to a sham protector; a man who had no legal rights towards her; who was neither husband, father, nor brother; who, though she was living under his roof, could not shelter her in the smallest degree, except as an ordinary friend. He was that anyhow, for he burst out in earnest and passionate rejoinder.

"How could I have spared you—only tell me! You talk of rights—what right had I to prevent the man's seeking you—to stand in the way of your marrying, as they tell me I do. Oh, Hannah! if you knew what misapprehension, what blame, I have subjected myself to, in all these weeks of silence. And yet now you—even you—turn round and accuse me."

"I accuse you!"

"Well, well, perhaps we are taking a too tragical view of the whole matter. You do not quite hate me?"

"No; on the contrary, it was you who said you hated me."

And that sudden change from pathos to bathos, from the sublime to the ridiculous, which, in talk, constantly takes place between people who are very familiar with one another, came now to soothe the agitation of both.

"Let us make a paction, for it will never do to have another quarrel, or even a coolness," said Mr. Rivers, with that bright, pleasant manner of his, which always warmed Hannah through and through like sunshine; she whose life, before she came to Easterham, had been, if placid, a little sunless, cold, and pale. "I know, whenever you tap your foot in that way, it is a sign you are waxing

wrath. Presently you will burst out, and tear me limb from limb, as—allegorically speaking—you delight to do, you being a ‘big lion,’ as Rosie says, and I as innocent as a lamb the whole time.”

Hannah laughed, and “got down from her high horse,” as he used to call it, immediately. She always did when he appealed to her in that irresistibly winning, good-humoured way. It is one of the greatest of mysteries—the influence one human being has over another. Oftener than not, because of extreme dissimilarity. Upon Hannah’s grave and silent nature, the very youthfulness, buoyantness, and frankness of this young man came with a charm and freshness which she never found in grave, silent, middle-aged people. Even his face, which she had once called too handsome—uninterestingly handsome,—she had come to look at with a tender pride—as his mother (so she said to herself at least) might have done.

“Well, papa,” she replied, “I don’t know whether you are a lamb or a lion, but you are without doubt the sweetest-tempered man I ever knew. It is a blessing to live with you, as Rosa once said.”

“Did she say that? poor darling! And—and do you think it? Oh, Hannah!” and he lifted up in the starlight a suddenly grave, even solemn, face; “if you know everything—if she were looking at us two here—would she not say—I am sure she would——”

But the sentence was never ended; for just as they stood at the hall-door, a scream resounded from within—an unmistakable woman’s scream.

“That is Grace’s voice. Oh, my baby, my baby!” cried Hannah, and darted away, Mr. Rivers following her.

---

#### CHAPTER VII.

No harm had befallen baby. Hannah, flying up-stairs on terror-winged feet, that carried her she hardly knew how, found her treasure all safe, lying fast asleep, as warm and soft as a little bird in its nest, in the quiet nursery.

Grace was not there, and yet it was certainly Grace’s voice she had heard. What could have happened? The uneasy fear that some time or other something uncomfortable might turn up concerning Jem Dixon was seldom long absent from Hannah’s mind, though it was not strong enough to take away the comfort she had in her intelligent and faithful nurse.

Of course the whole household, as well as every household at Easterham, knew Grace’s story. In such a small community concealment was impossible, even had Miss Thelluson wished it, which she did not. She had a great horror of secrets, and besides she felt that in this painful matter perfect openness was the safest course. Therefore, both to her servants and her neighbours, she had never hesitated to mention the thing, telling the plain story, accept-

ing it as an inevitable misfortune, and then protecting Grace to the utmost by her influence—the influence which any lady can use, both with equals and inferiors, when she is, like Hannah, quite firm in her own mind, and equally fearless in expressing it. Whatever people said behind her back, before Hannah's face nobody breathed a word against the poor nurse, who cowered gratefully under the shelter of her mistress's kindness, and kept out of other people's way as much as possible.

In her class broken hearts are rare ; working women have not time to die of grief. But though Grace said little or nothing, often when she sat sewing, with Rosie playing at her feet, Hannah watched with pity the poor sad face, and thought of the blighted life which nothing could ever restore. For, as has been said, Grace, brought up as little maid to the Miss Melvilles, had caught from them a higher tone of feeling, and a purer morality, in great things and small, than, alas ! is usually found among servants ; and she suffered accordingly. Her shame, if shame it could be called, seemed to gnaw into her very heart. So did her separation from the children. How far she grieved for their father could not be guessed ; she never named him, and, Hannah was certain, saw and heard nothing of him. But that scream, and a slight confusion which was audible down-stairs, convinced her that something—probably the vague something she always feared—had happened ; James Dixon had re-appeared.

She went down-stairs and found it so. In the servants' hall, the centre of an excited group—some frightened at him, some making game of him—stood a little, ugly-looking man, half-drunk, but not too drunk to be incapable of taking care of himself, or knowing quite well what he was about. He held Grace tight round the waist with one hand, and brandished a kitchen carving-knife with the other, daring everybody to come near him ;—which nobody did, until Mr. Rivers walked quietly up and took the knife out of his hand.

"James Dixon, what business have you in my house at this time of night?"

"I want my missis. I'm come to fetch my missis," stammered the man drunkenly, still keeping hold of Grace in spite of her violent struggles to get free.

"*She isn't his missis,*" cried some one from behind. "Please, sir, he married my cousin, Ann Bridges, only two months ago. He's always a-marrying somebody."

"But I don't like Ann Bridges now I've got her. She's for ever rating at me and beating the children ; and I'm a fond father, as doesn't like to see his little 'uns ill-used," added Jem, growing maudlin. "So I'd rather get rid of Ann and take Grace back again."

When he spoke of the children, Grace had given a great sob ; but now, when he turned to her his red, drunken face and wanted to kiss her, she shrank from him in disgust, and making one struggle wrenched herself free, and darted over to Mr. Rivers.

"Oh, please save me! I don't want to go back to him. I can't, sir, you know." And then she appealed despairingly to her mistress. "Did you hear what he said? That woman beats the children; I knew she would; and yet I can't go back. Miss Thelluson, you don't think I ought to go back?"

"Certainly not," said Hannah, and then her brother-in-law first noticed her presence.

"Pray go away," he whispered, "this is not a place for you. See, the man is drunk."

"I do not mind," she answered. "Just look at poor Grace; we must save her from him."

For Jem had again caught the young woman in his arms, where she lay, half-fainting, not resisting at all, evidently frightened to death.

"This cannot be endured," said Mr. Rivers angrily. "Dixon, be off with you! Webb, Jacob, take him between you and see him clear out of the gate."

Butler and footman advanced, but their task was not easy. Dixon was a wiry little fellow, sharp as a ferret, even in his cups. He wriggled out of the men's grasp immediately, and tried again to snatch at the kitchen-knife.

"Hands off, mates; I'll go fast enough. It isn't much a fellow gets in this house. Grace wouldn't even give me a drop o' beer. I'll be off, Mr. Rivers; but I'll not stir a step without my wife, that's the young woman there. I married her in church, same as I did t'other woman, and I like her the best o' the two; so do the little ones. I promised them I'd fetch her back. You'll come, Grace, won't you? and I'll be so kind to you."

"Oh, Jem, Jem!" sobbed poor Grace, melted by the coaxing tone; but still she tried to get away, and cried imploringly to her master to release her from Dixon's hold. Mr. Rivers grew angry.

"Let the woman go, I say. You have not the smallest claim upon her, no more than she upon you. If she chooses to stay here she shall. Begone, before I set the police on you!"

"Do it if you dare, sir," said Dixon, setting his back against the door. "I'll not stir a step without Grace; she's a pretty girl, and a nice girl, and I married her in church, too. I found a parson to do it, though you wouldn't."

"Your marriage is worth nothing; I told you so at the time. It was against the law, and the law does not recognise it. She is not your wife, and so, very rightly, she refuses to go back to you, and I, as magistrate, will protect her in this refusal. Let her go." And Mr. Rivers, following words by action, again shook off the fellow's grasp and left the young woman free. "Now, Grace, get away upstairs, and let us put an end to this nonsense."

For, in spite of their respect for their master, the other servants seemed rather amused than not at this spectacle of a gentleman arguing with a drunken man for the possession of his wife; or,

perhaps, some of them having as confused notions of the marriage laws as James Dixon, had thought Jem was rather hardly used, and ought to get Grace if he wanted. John the butler, an old servant, even ventured to hint this, and that it was a pity to meddle between man and wife.

"Did I not say plainly that she is not his wife?" cried Mr. Rivers in much displeasure. "A man cannot marry his wife's sister. I am master here, and out of my house she shall not stir against her will. Grace, go up-stairs immediately with Miss Thelluson."

Then Dixon's lingering civility and respect for the clergy quite left him. He squared up at Mr. Rivers in drunken rage.

"You're a nice parson, you are. Mind your own business and I'll mind mine. Your own hands bean't so very clean, I reckon. Some folk 'ud say mine were the cleanest o' the two."

"What do you mean, you scoundrel? Speak out, or I'll take you by the neck and shake you like a rat."

For Mr. Rivers was a young man, and his passions were up; and Dixon looked so very like a rat, with his glittering, hungry eyes, and a creeping way he had till he showed his teeth and sprung upon you. Hannah wondered how on earth poor, pretty Grace could ever have been persuaded to marry him. But no doubt it was like so many marriages, the mere result of circumstances, and for the sake of the children. "If ever I could marry that man, it would be for the sake of his children," said once a very good woman; and though men are probably too vain to believe it, many another good woman may have felt the same.

"What do I mean, sir?" said Dixon, with a laugh; "oh, you knows well enough what I mean, and so do your servants there, and so does all Easterham. There bean't much to choose betwixt you and me, Mr. Rivers, if all tales be true."

"What tales?" said Bernard slowly, turning white, though he still held his ground and deliberately faced the man. For all his servants were facing him, and on more than one countenance was a horrid kind of smile, the smile with which, in these modern days, when the old feudal reverence seems so mournfully wearing off, the kitchen often views the iniquities of the parlour. "What tales?"

"Of course it isn't true, sir—or else it doesn't matter—gentlefolks may do anything they likes. But people do say, Mr. Rivers, that you and I row in the same boat: only I was honest enough to marry my wife's sister, and you—wasn't. That's all!"

It was enough. Brief as the accusation was put, there was no mistaking it, or Dixon's meaning in it. Either Mr. Rivers had not believed the man's insolence would go so far, or was unaware of the extent to which the scandal had grown, but he stood, for the moment, perfectly paralysed. He neither looked to one side nor the other—to Hannah, who had scarcely taken it in, or to the servants, who had taken it in only too plainly. Twice he opened his lips to speak, and twice

his voice failed. At last he said, in a voice so hollow and so unlike his own that everybody started—

"It is a lie! I declare, before God and all now present, that what this man says against me is a foul, damnable lie!"

He uttered the ugly words as strongly and solemnly as he was accustomed to read such out of the Bible in his pulpit at church. They sent a thrill through every listener, and sobered even the drunken man. But Jem soon saw his advantage, and took it.

"Lie or not, sir, it looks just the same, and folks believe it all the same. When a poor man takes a young woman into his house, and either marries her or wants to, what an awful row you kick up about it! But when a gentleman does it—oh, dear! it's quite another thing!"

Mr. Rivers almost ground his teeth together, but still no words came except the repetition of those four, "It is a lie!"

"Well, if it is, sir, it looks uncommon queer, anyhow. For a young lady and a young gentleman to live together, and be a-going out and a-coming home together; and when we meets 'em, as I did a bit ago, not exactly a-going straight home, but a-walking and a-whispering together in the dark—'twas them, sure, for the lady had got a red hood on, and she's got it on still."

Hannah put up her hand to her head. Until this moment, confused and bewildered, and full of pity for unfortunate Grace, she had scarcely understood the scandal with regard to herself. Now she did. Plain as light—or, rather, black as darkness—she saw all that she was accused of, all that she had innocently laid herself open to, and from which she must at once defend herself. How?

It was horrible! To stand there and hear her good name taken away before her own servants, and with her brother-in-law close by! She cast a wild appealing look to him, as if he could protect her; but he took no notice—scarcely seemed to see her. Grace only—poor, miserable Grace—stole up to her and caught her hand.

"It is a lie, miss—and Jem knows it is! You mustn't mind what he says."

And then another of the women servants—an under-housemaid to whom she had been specially kind—ran across to her, beginning to cry. Oh, the humiliation of those tears!

Somebody must speak. This dreadful scene must be ended.

"Sister Hannah," said Mr. Rivers, at length recovering himself, and speaking in his natural manner, but with grave and pointed respect, "will you oblige me by taking Grace up-stairs? Webb and Jacob, remove this fellow from my house immediately; or else, as I said, we must fetch the police."

Mr. Rivers had great influence when he chose to exercise it, especially with his inferiors. His extraordinarily sweet temper, his tender consideration for other people's feelings, his habit of putting himself in their place—the lowest and most degraded of them, and judging them mercifully, as the purest-hearted always do judge—these things

stood him in good stead both in his household and his parish. Besides and when a mild man once gets thoroughly angry, people know he means it, and are frightened accordingly.

Either Dixon felt some slight remorse, or dreaded the police, but he suffered himself to be conveyed quietly outside, and the gate locked upon him, without making more ado than a few harmless pullings of the garden bell. These at last subsided, and the household became quiet.

Quiet, after such a scene! As if it were possible! Retiring was a mere form. The servants sat up till midnight, gossiping gloriously over the kitchen fire. Hannah heard them where she, too, sat, wide awake, in the dreadful silence and solitude of her own room.

She had gone up-stairs with Grace, as bidden; and they had separated, without exchanging a word, at the nursery door. For the first time in her life Hannah went to bed without taking one watchful, comforting look, one kiss of her sleeping darling. She went to bed in a mechanical, stunned way; for though it was still quite early, she never thought of rejoining her brother-in-law. She heard him moving up and down the house for an hour or more, even after that cruel clamour of tongues in the kitchen was silent; but to meet him again that night never struck her as a possibility. What help, what comfort, could he be to her?—he who was joined with her in this infamous slander? Henceforth, instead of coming to him for protection, she must avoid him as she would the plague.

"Oh, what have I done, and how have I erred, that all this misery should fall upon me?" moaned poor Hannah, as bit by bit she realised her position—the misinterpretations that might be put upon her daily conduct, even as upon to-night's walk across the hill. Perhaps what Dixon said was true—that all Easterham was watching her and speaking evil of her? Was this the meaning of Lady Rivers's dark hints—of the eager desire to get her married to Mr. Morecomb—of the falling-off of late in social civilities—a certain polite coldness in houses where her visits used to be welcomed—a gradual cessation of lady visitors at the House on the Hill? As all these facts came back upon her mind, fitting into one another, as unpleasant facts do, when one once fancies one has got the key to them, Hannah groaned aloud, feeling as if she could lay her down and die. It had all come so suddenly. She had gone on her way in such happy unsuspectingness. Yes! now she recognised with mingled wonder and—was it terror also?—how very happy she had been. There seemed nothing left for her but to lay her down and die.

Everybody knows the story of the servant lamenting his master's dying innocent, to whom the master said, "Would you have me die guilty?" Nevertheless, it is hard to die, even when innocent. No bitterer hour ever came to Hannah, or was likely to come, than that first hour after a bad man's wicked words had forced from Mr. Rivers the declaration—which, in itself, and in his ever feeling it incumbent upon himself to make it, was disgrace enough—"It is a lie!"

Of course it was ; and any friend who really knew them both would be sure of that. But what of the world at large—the careless world, that judges from hearsay—the evil world, which is always so quick to discover, so ready to gloat over, anything wrong ? And there must be something wrong, some false position, some oversight in conduct, some unfortunate concatenation of circumstances, to make such a lie possible.

“Be thou chaste as ice, pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny.” Most true ; but the calumny is rarely altogether baseless—some careless, passing hand may have smutched the snow, or the ice have let itself be carried too near the fire. Hannah remembered now, wondering she could have forgotten it so long, Lady Dunsmore’s warning : “He is not your brother ; it is only a social fiction that makes him so.” And if Bernard Rivers and she were not brother and sister, if there was no tie of blood between them, nothing that, if he had not been Rosa’s husband first, would have prevented their marrying—why, then, she ought not to have gone and lived with him. The chain of argument seemed so plain, that in thinking it out Hannah suddenly begun to tremble—nay, she actually shuddered ; but, strange contradiction ! it was not altogether a shudder of pain.

Fictions, social and otherwise, may have their day, when both the simple and the cunning accept them. But it is not a day which lasts for ever. By-and-by they tumble down, like all other shams ; and the poor heart who had dwelt in them is cast out, bare and shelterless, to face the bitter truth as best it may.

Hannah’s was the most innocent heart possible—strangely so for a woman who had lived, not ignorantly, in the world for thirty years. Whatever mistake she had fallen into—under whatever delusion she had wrapped herself—it was all done as unknowingly, as foolishly, as if she had been a seven-years’ old child. But that did not hinder her from suffering like a woman—a woman who, after a long dream of peace, wakes up to find she has been sleeping on the edge of a precipice.

That pleasant fiction which had been torn down by the rough hands of James Dixon, opened her eyes to its corresponding truth, that nature herself sets bounds to the association of men and women—certainly of young men and young women—and that, save under very exceptional circumstances, all pseudo-relationships are a mistake. Two people, who are neither akin by blood nor bound in wedlock, can seldom, almost never, live together in close and affectionate friendship without this friendship growing to be something less or something more. The thing is abnormal, and against nature ; and nature avenges herself by asserting her rights and exacting her punishments.

The law says to people in such positions—to brothers and sisters-in-law especially—“You shall not marry.” But it cannot say, “You shall not love.” It cannot prevent the gradual growth of that

fond, intimate affection which is the surest basis of married happiness. Suppose—Hannah put the question to herself with frightened conscience—suppose, instead of that tender friendship which undoubtedly existed between them, she and Bernard had really fallen in love with one another?

That he was very fond of her, in a sort of way, she never doubted. That she was fond of him—yes, that also was true. She could not help it. He was so good; he made her so happy. Many a man is deeply attached to a woman—wife or sister—whom he yet entirely fails in making happy. He thinks too much of himself, too little of her. But Bernard was a different kind of man. That sweet sunshininess of nature, that generous self-forgetfulness, that constant protecting tenderness—more demonstrative in deeds than words—qualities so rare in men, and so precious when found, were his to perfection. He was not brilliantly clever; and he had many little faults; rashnesses, bursts of wrath, sudden, childish, fantastic humours, followed by pathetic contrition; but he was intensely lovable. Hannah had told him truly when she said—oh, how hot she grew when she recalled it!—"that it was a blessing to live with him," for everybody whom he lived with he contrived to make happy.

"Oh, we have been so happy together," Rosa had sighed, almost with her last breath. And Rosa's sister, in the bitter pang which seemed like death—for it must surely result in a parting as complete—could have said the same.

Yes, of course she must go away. There seemed to her at first no other alternative. She must quit the House on the Hill the very next day. This, not alone for her own sake. It was, as Bernard had once said, truly a house on a hill, exposed to every comment, a beacon and example to every eye. No cloud of suspicion must be suffered to rest upon it—not for a day, an hour. She would run away at once.

And yet, was that the act of innocence—did it look like innocence? Was it not much more like the impulse of cowardly guilt? And if she did run, could she take Rosie with her?

Then, poor Hannah at once fell prone, crushed by a weight of misery greater than she could bear. To go away and leave her child behind! All Easterham might be howling at her, but she could never do that. Life without Rosie—the old, blank, sunless, childless life—she could not endure it. It would kill her at once. Better a thousand times stay on here, strong in her innocence, and let Easterham do and say its worst. For she had done no wrong, and, come what would, she had been happy. This sense of happiness, never stronger than a few hours ago, when she and Bernard were taking together that innocent-guilty walk, and finding out more than ever the deep, true harmony of soul, which, in spite of their great differences of character, existed between them, seemed to wrap her up, close and warm, her only shelter against the bitter outside blast.

What would her brother-in-law say? She could not act for herself alone; the position was as cruel for him as for her. She must think of him too, and wait for his opinion, whatever it might be. And then she became conscious how completely she had learned to look to Bernard's opinion, to lean upon his judgment, to consult his tastes, to make him, in short, for these many months, what no man who is neither her relative nor her lover ought to be to any woman—the one primary object of her life.

Utterly bewildered, half-frightened, and unable to come to the slightest conclusion, Hannah, after lying awake half the night, fell heavily asleep, nor wakened till the sound of little feet in her room, and the shrill, joyous cry—as sweet as the song of a lark springing up into the morning air over a clover field—"Tannie, Tannie! Wake up, Tannie!" dispersed in a moment all the cloudy despairs of the night.

Tennyson knew human nature well when he made the rejected lover say,—

"My latest rival brings thee rest:

Baby fingers, waxen touches, press me from the mother's breast."

That is, they press out every image unholy, or painful, or despairing. Such cannot long exist in any heart that is filled with a child. Hannah had sometimes read in novels of women who were mothers falling in love, and with other men than their own husbands; kissing their babies in their innocent cradles, and then flying from lawful homes to homes unlawful. All these stories seemed to her then very dreadful, very tragical, but not quite impossible. Now, since she had had Rosie, they almost did seem impossible. How a woman once blessed with a child could ever think of any man alive she could not comprehend.

Hannah had not held her little niece beside her for five minutes—feasting her eyes on the loving, merry face, and playing all the funny little games which Rosie and Tannie were so grand at when together—before all the agony of last night became as unreal as last night's dreams. This was the real thing—the young life entrusted to her care—the young soul growing up under the shelter of her love. She rose and dressed for breakfast, feeling that with the child in her arms she could face the whole world.

Ay, her brother-in-law included; though this was a hard thing. She would not have been a woman not to have found it hard. And if he decided that she must stay—that, strong in their innocence, they must treat Dixon's malicious insolence as mere insolence, no more, and make no change whatever in their way of life—still, how doubly difficult that life would be! To meet day after day at table and fireside; to endure, not in cheerful ignorance, but painful consciousness, the stare of all suspicious eyes, especially of their own household, who had heard them so wickedly accused, and seen—they must have seen!—how deep the wound had gone. It would be dreadful—almost unbearable.

And then—with regard to their two selves !

Bernard was—Hannah knew it, felt it—one of the purest-hearted of men. Living in the house with him was like living with a woman ; nay, not all women had his delicacy of feeling. Frank and familiar as his manner was—or had been till lately—he never was free with her—never caressed her ; nothing but the ordinary shake of the hand had ever passed between them, even though he was her brother-in-law. Hannah liked this reserve ; she was not used to kissing ; as people in large families are, as the Moat-House girls were ; it had rather surprised her to see the way they all hung about young Mr. Melville. But, even though in their daily conduct to one another, private and public, she and Bernard could never be impeached, still the horrible possibility of being watched—watched and suspected—and that both knew it was so, was enough to make the relations between them so painful, that she hardly knew how she should bear it.

Even this morning her foot lingered on the stair, and that bright breakfast-room, with its pleasant morning greeting, seemed a sort of purgatory that she would have escaped if she could.

She did escape it, for it was empty of everybody but Webb, the butler, whom she saw hovering about ; near, suspiciously near, to an open note, or rather a scrap of paper, left on the table, open—was it intentionally open ?—for anybody's perusal ?

"Master has just gone off to the railway in the dog-cart, Miss Thelluson. He left me this bit of paper, with an apology to you ; saying he was in a great hurry, and hadn't time to write more, or he would miss the London train."

"He has gone to London ?" said Hannah, with a great sense of relief, and yet of pain.

"Yes, miss, I think so ; but the note says——"

Then Webb *had* gratified his curiosity by reading the paper.

Anybody might have read it, certainly. It might have been printed in the *Times* newspaper, or declaimed by the Easterham town-crier for the benefit of the small public at the market-place. And yet Hannah's eyes read it eagerly, and her heart beat as she did so in a way that no sight of Bernard's familiar handwriting had ever made it beat before.

"DEAR SISTER HANNAH,

"I am away to town to visit a sick friend, and am obliged to start very early. I hope to be back by Sunday, but do not expect me till you see me. Give papa's love to his little Rosie, and believe me,

"Your affectionate brother,

"BERNARD RIVERS.

"Perhaps you will kindly call at the Moat-House to-day, and tell them I am gone ?"

## CLASS MORALITY.

---

THE state of our class morality is becoming both nationally and socially a most serious question. In a debate upon the great failures, "which have grown of late alarmingly common," Mr. Gladstone animadverted most severely upon "the haste to get rich, the decline of commercial honour in England, even putting aside the cases of money acquired by direct fraud, or by the many ways of taking advantage of circumstances, which are deemed fair in commerce, though a person of delicate conscience would scruple to use them in most other concerns of life."

How serious these trade dishonesties may become nationally has lately been seen in the discovery by the German troops of muskets with the stamp, "Tower, 1870," on them, in the hands of the French soldiers, which brought upon us an angry remonstrance from the German ambassador for thus selling government arms to the French. The reputation of England was imperilled by such a supposed breach of faith. It has been proved satisfactorily that no muskets of the pattern in question were made for Government since 1869, and that the "Tower" mark had been forged by the Birmingham manufacturers to give credit to their goods; but it is sufficiently ignominious to be even suspected of such an offence. It is proverbially difficult to prove a negative to an angry disputant, and although in England the accusation sounds simply absurd, it is clear that Germany was only half-convinced. If the evident ill-will she has already shown should be aggravated by similar supposed causes of affront, and a quarrel is brought about between Prussia and England, we may feel that it is due in great measure to the men who have thus recklessly risked their country's honour by these wretched forgeries for the sake of a small additional profit.

It is only part of a system. In the struggle for existence, which is becoming so hot in commerce, both at home and abroad, our virtue has given way in a manner which must go far to break up the confidence of the world in our national honesty, and which may already account for some of the decline in trade complained of in Sheffield and elsewhere. Formerly, our good name for honourable dealing stood so high, that, for instance, in the towns of the Pacific, forty or fifty years ago, English goods were the only ones which were bought by invoice—*i.e.*, on trust, without examination, before their arrival, while the buyers always insisted on seeing the wares from other countries before they ventured their money. Our reputation is now no longer the same; short lengths, imperfect textures, guns which burst after a few discharges, knives which will not cut, bid fair to destroy the good

repute of the nation, built up by centuries of fair dealing; and confidence, which can never be restored, may be lost over vast areas in an incredibly short space of time by a few great frauds.

A sort of feeling seems to have grown up that international morality, like gravitation, diminishes as the squares of the distance increase, and that we may cheat without harm if it is only far enough off—"among the savages;"—as Mr. Gordon Cumming describes himself chuckling over his exchange of infamously bad guns for ivory, in the heart of Africa, with the comfortable reflection that he would be far away when they burst in the negroes' hands.

Christians in the nineteenth century, and in England, are supposed to hold theoretically one standard of right and wrong, however little they may practise it; but if we dig below the surface of this general acquiescence, which means nothing, it is strange to find how wide is the range permitted by the different codes according to which different classes govern their conduct. Men of different castes in England have so little knowledge of each other, that it is sometimes almost as difficult to realise our neighbours' "stand-point" as if we lived in different planets.

For instance, an educated man can hardly conceive a decent, respectable tradesman taking up a handful of sand, or chromate of lead, or mahogany dust to mix with his sugar or pepper; deliberately putting salt and *coeculus indicus* into his beer to increase thirst, and making it bitter by strychnine and petroleum; while the list of abominations mixed with our tea, such as the remains of silkworms, warehouse dust, iron filings, &c., "finished up" with a solution of gum, is almost too disgusting to detail. Yet Mr. Hassall's investigations prove how large is the proportion of shops which sin in this way. Indeed, hitherto the revelations have done little but harm, as they have only informed the trade how much systematic adulteration is habitually going on, without affixing any penalty to the discovery. It is particularly on the poor that the evil falls most heavily—the rich can buy wholesale—and the small retail shops are those which of course offend the most.

It is to be hoped that the Government will now legislate seriously upon these questions, which individual efforts can hardly reach, and which perhaps can only be satisfactorily dealt with by some form of co-operative stores. There is hardly a trade which is exempt. Quinine can be bought far cheaper at a little village chemist's than wholesale in London; what proportion of the real bark can be contained in the compound? It is often worse than useless to have a prescription made up by these licensed poisoners, as the drugs ordered by the doctor can hardly be said to be there in any form whatever.

An official report of the goldsmiths and jewellers in England showed that nine-tenths of the articles sold as gold and paid for as such, ought properly to be called copper alloyed with gold. "Ordinary jewellery is a mixture containing only from 15 to 40 per cent. of the

precious metal," which is thus sold with impunity, the unlucky customers being quite unaware of the fact, and having no means of detecting the amount of alloy.

Whole trades exist at Birmingham simply for purposes of deception. False "antiquities" in metal and pottery of all kinds and adapted to all countries and all dates—jars and flint weapons made as the produce of British cairns, gods sent out to be "found" in Egypt, coins and bronze ornaments to Rome, Nismes, &c., are a wholesale export, not an accidental rascality. There is a manufacture of sham stones, used by lapidaries at sea-side places to be exchanged for any really good pebbles picked up by visitors, which as often happens are brought to them to be polished. That it is rightful to make and sell whatever there may be a demand for, appears to be fast becoming an axiom of traders.

Again, the multiplication of small shops has become so great that the neck and neck race to obtain any profit is very severe; "half a pinch" may often make the difference in underselling their competitors, accordingly false balances come in to their help, and are leniently regarded by the sellers. At the successive special sessions, week after week, the dismal list of tradesmen convicted of having false weights and measures in their possession appears. Little notice is taken of it by the public in their insane desire for cheap goods; the sinners are fined, and apparently find it worth while to go on as before, for the same names appear again and again. Ought not the fine to be at least doubled each time the offence is repeated?

The different trades are pretty evenly represented. At one session, and not a particularly heavy one, there were sentenced—2 marine-store dealers, 20 publicans, 23 chandlers and cheesemongers, 3 bakers, 1 eating-house keeper, 5 coal dealers, 6 butchers, 1 oilman; 62 in all. The fines on one occasion amounted to £150. In some countries the conviction and the sentence are nailed up over each delinquent's door, which probably has some effect; and the Turkish plan, by which the sinner's hand is struck off, is no doubt excellent, only we should scarcely by this time have a hand left to serve us among our trades folk if it were carried out.

In commerce the tone of morality does not appear to be much higher. It was announced last autumn, that whereas Australia had hitherto received furniture from England, the things sent were so intolerably bad that the colonists have begun to make their goods for themselves. There had been a regular system called the "getting up trade" for the exportation of rubbish to the colonies. Again, it is considered perfectly legitimate to use any prior information, whatever it may be, to obtain advantages which the buyer would refuse if he possessed the same knowledge. In this way a merchant at Liverpool, hearing privately that his ship had been lost, sold her cargo all the same, and when the fact came out, his world only considered that he had been "very sharp."

The want of morality in the management of railroads has in some cases amounted to swindling. The paying of dividends out of capital, the cooking of accounts, the manner in which private convenience and private pique among the officials, has regulated the arrangements between different lines, the public being considered as a natural enemy only to be despoiled, the greed of gain from high to low, culminating in the worship of the Railway King Hudson, has been one of the phases of the nineteenth century of which, when its history is written, it will have least cause to be proud.

Again, among artisans the tyranny exercised by the majority over the minority, admits almost any amount of fraud and force in carrying out a point of trades' union law with scarcely any reproach. Yet the Sheffield workman, who considers it a venial offence to throw vitriol with intent to put out his neighbour's eyes, to "ratten" him, *i.e.*, to blow him up with gunpowder and broken bottles for refusing to join in a strike, talks by the hour of the oppression of the masters and the landlords. At this moment many of the very men who, in the days of the agitation against the corn-laws were most open-mouthed about "the selfishness" of farmers and squires in keeping up the price of wheat for their own interest, are clamouring for protection to enhance the price of cotton, or whatever may be the article by which they themselves profit. "Free-trade in everything but bristles," says the brush maker.

With regard to the upper class, there is an unwritten code of what befits gentlemen, which even the less scrupulous amongst them must be far gone before they break. There are a number of deeds which the law of honour makes simply impossible to many a man whose principles are not very stern, and which place him at a disadvantage in trade, where he is sometimes brought in contact with practices and ways of thought repugnant to his gentlemanly feeling, quite independent of his instinct of right and wrong. It is well for him to remember that he has never been tempted in such matters. There is a curious latitude on certain other points allowed. With regard to horses, "*careat emptor*" is held to be good manners and good morals by high-bred English gentlemen, who would not stain what they conceive to be their "honour" for any consideration.

In elections the code has hitherto been wonderfully lax (though in this case it has been in the spending, not the getting of money), and an amount of underhand work has been connived at, to say the least, not more reputable to the briber than the bribed. In the House of Commons it used to be only necessary to look down the names forming an election committee to feel pretty sure of the result. "Three Tories out of five members—then poor — was doomed." "Three Whigs—then lucky — was safe." Scarcely any disguise was considered necessary in such party questions. Fortunately this practice has now been put an end to by entrusting election trials to the ordinary tribunals, which are politically unbiassed.

Men in office have been sometimes called on to imply a denial of

that which is true and yet cannot be acknowledged ; but there is a certain received manner in which this must be done, and in the present generation, an official (and an honourable gentleman too) overstepped this limit and entered on the "lie circumstantial," which could be, and was, immediately found out, and was therefore unpardonable. He felt so keenly the sort of ostracism inflicted upon him, that he left England on a mission of self-devotion in order to reinstate himself in his own and public opinion. Being new to official life, he had in his enthusiasm, like the Othello in "Nicholas Nickleby," blacked himself all over in order to play his part, whereas society only allowed the blacking as far as his hands and face.

Every class, every profession, lawyers, schoolboys, ladies, servants, clergymen, have their own special code of laxity—matters which they can and cannot do according to the judgment of their peers, very far indeed removed from the standard of perfect uprightness.

Each, too, has a special gift for making light of its own special failing, and falling heavily on that of other folk ; the point of most temptation being, of course, that where the conscience of the class is always most lax. The fence may be high and strong where danger is weak and far removed ; but where the treading has been severe and the pressure trying, it is generally beaten down so as to be hardly visible.

Besides which, with the world at large crime is hardly regarded as such unless it shocks public opinion, and public opinion with most people is simply that of their own class. A man who lives in Grosvenor Square cares nothing for the opinion of Grosvenor Alley. He who lives in Grosvenor Alley is equally indifferent to the opinion of the square, even if he is a small tradesman and "serves" it. The opinion of my lord's man or my lady's-maid is of great consequence ; but the potentates themselves are of as little importance to him as the Emperor of Morocco or the Tycoon of Japan.

As to shocking conscience, conscience, if properly manipulated, may be trained to almost any abomination—to stuffing your father's mouth with Ganges mud, and drowning him for the benefit of his soul, or delivering him over to the Inquisition ; to putting your superfluous little girls to death in India, or shutting them up in convents when they are older, as in Italy.

It is true that a sin, not recognised as such by a man's set or caste, does not injure his character to the amount which its absolute sinfulness would seem to entail. But, on the other hand, to do what his class or conscience, however ill-directed, declares to be a sin, seriously impairs the moral sense even when it is perfectly innocent. Murderers and thieves often attribute their beginnings of evil to some most innocent piece of what is called "sabbath-breaking." And rightly: neither they nor their fathers have been able to keep the strictness of the Jewish enforcement of it, as sometimes administered ; but having been taught, for instance, that it was wicked to take a walk on Sunday, the feeling of guilt was incurred by doing so, and the power of resistance in greater matters weakened.

When, however, the steam cannot get out at the spout, it makes an unlawful opening for itself elsewhere. At Glasgow the blinds are pulled down and walking even in the fields is forbidden by public opinion on the Sabbath, but it is allowable to drink whisky *ad libitum* in the back parlour; while in Greece the brigands, reversing the compensatory process, did not scruple at the trifle of murdering our five poor countrymen, but risked much in coming down from the mountains to keep their Easter, and were extremely rigid in their fasts and devotions. The same feeling appears in the English shopkeeper, who half-poisons his customers by adulterations, but is most particular in his keeping of Sunday, his church or chapel pew; and all his little dues of respectability are not at all infringed in his mind by such trifles as false weights and bad goods.

"Compound for sins we are inclined to,  
By damning those we have no mind to,"

has not lost its force since Hudibras' time.

There is a singular want of proportion in the morality of most people. They have acquired their principles at different periods of their lives. It is specially the case with the uneducated. One part of their conduct is no criterion for what they will do in the rest of life; one sense seems often to have grown, while the others remain in embryo. The ordinary cotters in Ireland can only be considered in many respects as savages at a very low stage of development; yet they have the sense of chastity, which the much more cultivated inhabitants of a Scotch town or village consider it scarcely a fault to infringe. The report of a Commission shows that "amongst the agricultural population in the north and east of Scotland personal chastity is the exception rather than the rule," and in the towns the number of illegitimate children reported in the census year after year is frightful; while in Ireland, as has been often remarked, they are scarcely known; yet the Irish peasant is entirely wanting in the thriving, comfortable, law-abiding virtues which education develops among the Scotch, and which might be supposed most likely to bring this further result with them.

Landlord-killing, if not absolutely right, is a venial offence in Ireland, but to eat a mutton chop on a wrong day endangers a man's salvation. A fugitive who had been carefully hidden, as having committed murder, was driven out ignominiously when a newcomer cried out, "Not he; he's not killed a man! it's pig-staling they're after him for;" he was then delivered over remorselessly to justice. Pig-stealing is a crime which affects their own class; landlord-killing is, at worst, a misfortune for that of their neighbour.

The code of servants, even the most respectable, often allows a certain latitude as to perquisites and presents from tradesmen, and in certain sets an amount of petty scandal "and harm of slanderous tongues" which it is not pleasant to come across. Above all their "honour" requires that "tales" are not to be told. Even when serious

misdeeds are going on, not a word must be uttered, even by those who disapprove. Let the unlucky master find them out if he can, though the comfort of the whole establishment may be imperilled meantime.

There is a curious equivalent to this code among schoolboys even of the higher class. The amount of untruth permitted by public opinion amongst them at our great schools, was said the other day in a sermon by Dr. Vaughan, on a visit to his old haunts at Harrow, to be grievous. Boys may bully, they may lie, they may commit a variety of misdeeds without losing caste; but if they tell tales, their character is gone. A boy has often an entirely different standard for the two halves of the year—one conscience for home, another for school. It would not even occur to him to commit school sins at home, or to introduce home morality at school: "He leaves it behind, as he does his pony or his gun." There is a strange casuistry in his mind, which makes, for instance, one particular kind of lie harmless, such as answering in another boy's name at "Bill," while the truant is perhaps gone off "on a spree" (upon a promise of reciprocity); while the equivalent lie, direct to a master, is a "shame," and the boy who commits it a "brute." "Honour" is his rule. Now honour is an excellent thing, but its code is, to say the least, a variable one. It is the "outward and visible sign" of the inward grace, principle. Honour is the opinion of a deed as seen in the world's eye; principle, as it is seen by the inward standard. But we require the help of both restraints. We must correct our reckoning, as at sea, whichever way it is taken. If we square action by outside opinion, we shall fall very low. On the other hand, if we "descend into the depths of our own consciousness" for our law, we are at least as likely to fail—to make special rules for each circumstance—all exceptions.

Women and clergymen have in general little honour, though often a great deal of principle—i.e., they would suffer tortures before doing what they think wrong, but they are apt to make a law for themselves of their own little prejudices and feelings, adjusting justice to their own special case, and for much the same reason—namely, the lack of the open discipline of the world. A man in the battle of life is laughed at or worried out of all singularities of feeling not based upon some tangible foundation; his reason may not always be a very reasonable one, but it is seldom with him a mere fancy, he feels that he is obliged to give some argument for the faith that is in him. While the clergyman labours under the immense disadvantage of standing up three or four times a week and discoursing on anything he pleases, without any possibility of contradiction. He may (and does) enounce any amount of platitudes, of unreason, of want of logic, of ignorance of what can be said on the other side, not only without ever hearing himself opposed at the time, but it is thought as wrong to criticise the sermon afterwards among many good people, as if it came from the lips of St. Paul himself. If the clergyman is young and ignorant and silly, and even the most pious Churchman will allow that this is possible (at least in that portion of the Church to which he does not himself belong), he

transfers the sacredness of the subject to his own expression of it, and becomes infallible in his own mind from having Sunday after Sunday to lecture those who may be far older and wiser than himself upon their doctrines and their duties.

Women have hitherto laboured under something of the same disadvantage; the want of logic or of reason in what a woman, particularly a pretty one, utters, is not laughed at or corrected as if it came from the lips of a man; indeed, to hear her run on, confusing, confounding, asserting, guessing, with her quick perceptions and her imperfect education, gives a certain pleasant feeling of superiority to her male acquaintance. They smile in gentle contempt, and "thank heaven that they are not as this woman," as they "make allowances" for her. One consequence of this want of an external tribunal of opinion, and of the limitation of the interests of women to purely personal and family objects, is the tendency to encourage a lower standard on questions of public morality. "A couple of pounds will be so useful to send Tommy to school, what's the harm of taking it?" says the poorer woman to her husband at an election. "It will be so useful for the girls to go to that great ministerial party; why on earth can't you vote for government, and then we should be asked?" says the upper class one to hers. Such scruples must appear utterly vain to those in whose eyes politics are only a tiresome mystery.

In a smaller way, the cheating and bullying, the flirting and unjustifiable pressure which ladies, particularly of the severer forms of faith, allow themselves to commit at bazaars and the like, under cover of "charitable purposes" (!), are a wonder to the outside world.

There is another degradation of national morality which is increasing rapidly, and threatens to have very serious effects—*i.e.*, the giving of false characters and testimonials. The dislike of inflicting pain, or the fear of incurring trouble, the temptation to make things pleasant, is admitting incompetent persons to all sorts of situations, with most disastrous consequences. The discussions on a late great public school appointment may make the necessity of more distinct rules in such matters still more evident. It is surely a part of that honourable truth upon which we so much pride ourselves as a nation, to give an honest opinion on a person's qualifications if we give one at all. Indeed, most of our lapses may be resolved into the absence of the highest kind of truth. Our duty to our neighbour certainly demands that he be not cheated into believing that which is false.

The extraordinary difference, however, of our standards of morality is visible in nothing perhaps so much as in the estimate of truth on the two shores of the Channels which divide us from our Celtic neighbours on both sides. The Irish nature, with its impulsive love of sympathy and its pleasure in being agreeable, tries to find out what answer will be pleasant to its interlocutor, and replies accordingly, quite irrespective of any slavish adherence to truth. If it is not the fact, so much the worse for the fact. While in France the impossibility of telling unpleasant truths of any kind to the nation

may be said to have been the ruin of the country during the whole period of the war.

But the subject of the comparative standards of national morality is far too great to enter upon here. There is, as yet, hardly any sign of their melting into each other; but at least every nation and every class has the satisfaction of despising every other whose code differs from its own. Absolute morality is hardly even aspired to at present, among any body of men, either internationally or socially. Indeed, in the highest class, we have hardly yet made up our minds whether, when one man has injured another in the most painful possible manner, he has not entirely wiped out the offence by offering to shoot the sufferer through the body.

The mist of words covers much confusion of thought, and is answerable for a multitude of sins. It would be a help if we were to hear things called by their right names. Many a worthy tradesman would be shocked if he were told that he commits theft habitually of a very aggravated kind; theft of the health, as well as of the pockets, of his customers. Many an excellent man and woman would be horrified at their own conduct if they could be convinced that to help to recommend an unfit person for a post is not only a lie, but a cruel and wicked one. And an artisan might pause if he could be made to understand that blowing up a man with gunpowder is murder, however disguised under the name of justice.

Our sermons are supposed to have lost a part of their savour, might not clergymen try the experiment of a kind of teaching somewhat more like that of the Founder of our faith? *i.e.*, of bringing before us the sins we commit in words which we all can understand?—Political sermons, showing that a vote is a trust, on whichever side it is given, imposing a duty as well as giving a right to its holder, and that the briber is even more blamable than the bribed.—Social sermons, showing that duty to our neighbour includes the not sarding his sugar, and not taking advantage of his ignorance or confidence in any way.—Sanitary sermons, showing the connection between cleanliness and godliness, and that landlords, small as well as great, are cheating, when they exact rent for dwellings scarcely fit even for beasts to inhabit—whose foul air and foul water must entail the loss of health in soul and body alike.—In short, to attempt to raise our mean class-codes into the light of a higher, broader morality.—Showing how no act, however small, is really indifferent, but each is done to the glory of God or the glory of the devil. This would be at least more like the “parables” which we affect to admire, and do not think of copying, than the endless arguments on metaphysical points of doctrine, far above the comprehension of the majority of audiences, on which the ordinary sermon delights to expatiate. We have fortunately got rid of that “dignity of history” which consisted in a colourless series of generalities, and the omission of all details and small individual interests,—the “dignity” of preaching in the same sense might perhaps fall through with advantage; though it may be objected that it would demand a rare union of tact,

good feeling, and weight of age and experience to make such direct application useful, or even safe.

With regard to the adulteration of food and drugs, and the question of short weights, it is to be hoped that the promised legislation of the present session may sharpen the blunted consciences of the class in fault. But a deeper reform is necessary. We have lately seen the collapse of a great nation, mainly from the utter disorganisation in her army and administration, produced by peculation extending, it is said, from the highest to the lowest officials. The magnificent preparations on which her Emperor and his ministers relied, existed only on paper. Every one had robbed to the best of his ability. It has been told how the congregation of a newly-installed rabbi proposed generously to furnish him with wine. Every Jew carried a jug down into the priestly cellar, and emptied it into a cask. When the contents were drawn, however, it was found to contain nothing but water. Each Jew had thought that his own jugful would not be detected in the general flood of wine, and, like the French officials, had not calculated what would be the consequences if all were as sharp as himself.

Some revelations have lately been made in a series of trials which show a very alarming state of morals among a class of English *employés* hitherto considered as "most respectable." The ships' stewards of our men-of-war are entrusted by necessity with great power over the provisioning of their vessels, and in their hands is much of the material comfort of the crew. Probity is, of course, the most necessary of their qualifications, and one which the captains are supposed to spare no pains to secure. It has just been discovered that a regular system of fraud has long been carried out by these men. They demanded exorbitant bribes for the "custom" of their ships from the different contractors—particularly the butchers; these, to recoup themselves, sent in habitually a much smaller amount of meat than that paid for by Government—in some cases *none at all*. The rations of men who happened to have been on shore with leave were put down as having been given out on board, while the paymasters, whose duty it was to see that the accounts of men and food tallied, were too fine gentlemen to go into such minor details. "On the 27th October, 1870, 750 lbs. of fresh beef reported to the paymaster; none at all received," was by no means an isolated instance of such a proceeding. This cheating, connived at for their own profit, was considered by the stewards as such a matter of course, that it does not seem to have troubled the consciences of men whose characters stood highest.

Such discoveries make one ask anxiously what may be going on in other public departments as well as in private service. We cannot afford to be uncertain on such points. We must set our house in order before it is too late, for there is no reformation possible in the face of the enemy (to put it on the lowest ground), as has been too painfully seen in the misfortunes and failures of our poor neighbour. Nationally and socially we may do well to examine our "class morality." V.

## FESTINA LENTE.

---

IGNORANT people never read this magazine, but if they did, and any country cousin were to make a dash at this paper, taking Festina to be Italian for a pretty girl, and expecting a love-story, how disappointed he would be to find that it was Latin, and that the whole title meant, Hasten slowly. It is one of those two-faced maxims that have a great deal to answer for. You may praise the concentrated wisdom of an epigram as long as you please, but every stroke of proverbial wit like this is more of a fool-trap than any thing else. Clever people invent such things for their own entertainment and that of other clever people; and what is the consequence? The clever people have their joke; but the great mass of mankind are perplexed and put about by the use to which the stupid folk put the smart saying. There is no proof that the Fat Boy in "Pickwick" fortified himself by meditation on this proverb; but there is no proof that he did not, and at all events he might have done if he had liked. Assuredly there are plenty of slack-minded people who are corrupted by what the proverb has suggested. Mankind are not, as a rule, so expeditious that they need telling to be slower.

When I was a boy I suffered many things at the hands of a fable entitled, "The Hare and the Tortoise," which still dwells, though perhaps a little imperfectly, in my recollection. As a check upon the rapidity of my movements, I was recommended to get it by heart, and I did so. In the first couplet, the word "genius" was printed in italics by way of indicating that it was a term of reproach:—

"A forward hare, of swiftness vain,  
The genius of the neighbouring plain,  
Would boast his flight 'twere vain to follow,  
For dog and horse he'd beat 'em hollow."

Then the fabulist proceeds to say that, the Hare and the Tortoise being set to race each other, the Hare, deriding the pace of his competitor, went to sleep, and so the Tortoise won, saying—

"You may deride my awkward pace,  
But slow and steady wins the race."

But *which* race, pray? Of course it was *that* race, because the quick-footed runner overslept himself. But does any sane person believe that if the Hare had gone on running as hard as ever he could, the Tortoise would have got in first? If Captain Barclay and the Fat

Boy (supposing they had been contemporaries, which I neither affirm nor deny) had been backed for a race from London to Richmond, and Barclay had thought proper to go to bed at Putney and stay there long enough, of course the Fat Boy might have got to Richmond first. But that does not prove that "slow and steady" is better than "swift and steady." All this I used to represent when I was a youngster, but I was only assured in return that when I was older I should be wiser.

Now I am not a bit wiser. I still maintain that if two persons start fair to traverse a distance of say twenty miles, and one of them goes five miles an hour, while the others goes only two-and-a-half, the first will win—that is, if nothing happens to him, such as a lethargy, or a fit of apoplexy, or a broken leg. Supposing that to be so, it only remains to inquire whether the five-mile man is more likely to have an accident than the other. But I submit that we have no statistics to enable us to decide the question. "General observation?" *Ah, crainment!* I think I know what *that* is worth.

However, if general observation is any test, I suppose my general observation is worth as much as other people's. Now, we have been over and over again lately told by "experts"—a class of persons in whom I have no faith whatever—that the rate of speed at which we live in modern days has caused a great increase of insanity and heart-disease. Well, I have been about town a good deal; and I do not see that people are more insane than they used to be. I watched heaps of them to-day, and they looked much the same as usual. I could not tell whether they had heart-disease, but they did not, as a rule, carry it in their faces, and I think I know *angina pectoris* when I see it. Besides that, some of the slowest people I have ever known have had heart-disease; and others of the same sort have gone mad. It is all very well to say that Turks and Red Indians, who are never in a hurry, do not go mad; but, in the first place, I firmly believe they do; and, even if they do not, there is a sort of diffused idioty about the whole body of them, which comes to pretty much the same thing.

A great many extraneous arguments have been employed by fanciful people in order to make their fellow-creatures go slower. Not content with what was to be found at his own door and ours, Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes has actually gone back to the grey twilight of history for inducements:—

"Think of the patriarchs; then compare as men  
These lean-cheeked maniacs of the tongue and pen!  
Run, if you like, but try to keep your breath."

"Think of the patriarchs!" Well, I do think of the patriarchs. And what then? What had the patriarchs to do? They lived in tents which they moved about just as they liked. Abraham never heard of the assessed taxes in all his life. The patriarchs had nothing

to do but to tend their flocks and herds like the shepherd in *As You Like It*. They had to count the sheep, milk the cows (or see that they were milked), and cherish their wives, of which each patriarch seldom had more than two at a time. This—making some allowance for diversions to repel marauding expeditions by neighbouring tribes—was a very empty sort of existence; for there is every reason to believe that in those days two wives, or twenty, gave less trouble than one does now. So, what inference can be drawn from patriarchal times that would be fairly applicable to our own? Moralists must be very hard driven for topics when they have to go back to Mesopotamia, and Kirjath-Jearim, and places of that sort, for an idea. Did Abraham ever keep an appointment in Fleet Street? No. Then what are we to do? Are we to abolish Fleet Street? I should like to see the man who would try it on. In that case, it only remains that we accommodate ourselves to the exigencies of the situation, and do our work as fast as ever we can.

If we proceed on any other principle, we shall eventually come to a pretty pass. "Haven't you got any other pace than that?" said an enraged master to an errand-boy who was walking at the rate of two miles an hour. "Ye-es," yawned the youngster; "I've got another, but it's slower." Just so. If we only succeed in impressing mankind with the notion that they are moving too fast, they will go from slowness to slowness till at last they stand clean stock-still. This might be agreeable to certain evil-disposed persons, but it would never do for those who believe in progress, and love it. If we have a goal to reach, the quicker we go the sooner we shall get there. All we need take care of is, that we move in the right direction. It is notorious that sheep, and other imitative creatures, will follow each other in any direction whatsoever, and take the time from their compatriots—if that is the right word, which I doubt. But we are not sheep. Nor are we bound for the butcher's yard. We have a destiny. We have a goal. We have an Atlantis. We have a *sum-mum bonum*. We have a millennium. Let us get at it as quickly as ever we can!

Let us remember, also, that the sooner we have done our work the more time we shall have for play. I strenuously adhere to the early-closing movement. You know very well that a tune upon a hurdy-gurdy may be played faster or slower. If the player would only give his mind to it, he might get through the *repertoire* of his hurdy-gurdy in an infinitesimally small space of time. Why should we not treat the labours of existence upon the same principle? Turn the handle as fast as ever you can; have done with the work; and then we shall have practically boundless tracts of leisure for recreation.

Opposite the very room in which I am now writing there is a dead wall. Upon that dead wall there were, a few days back, about half-a-dozen pictorial posters. There was one of Binko's Paper Blue—with

a daintily-buxom girl up to the elbows in soap-suds. There was another of a lady, with eyes like Solitaire-balls, carrying an umbrella; and underneath was an injunction to the observer to look and see where his umbrella was worn out. Then there was Thorley's Food for Cattle, and Horniman's Pure Uncoloured Tea. I have no doubt you have observed, with inexpressible anguish, the tedious rate at which "the working-man" goes through his labours;—it cannot have escaped your attention, if you have had the plumber, or the gas-fitter, or the paper-hanger about the place. Well, one morning, four great hulking lubbers—I presume from the Metropolitan Board of Works, for the wall is an august wall—marched up to these posters with ladders, pails, scrapers, and brooms, in battle array; and it took those four stalwart Englishmen—a general term which I employ under reserve, for one or more or all of the fellows might have been Scotch or Irish—I say it took them two whole days to remove those posters. The sight made my blood boil. I would, unassisted, have cleaned that wall in two hours, or I would have lived on Binko's Paper Blue for a week. Yet this is the sort of thing to which those "experts," who raise the cry of "*Festina lente*" wish to bring us! It is true that "*Hasten slowly*" may be taken to mean what Lord Bacon meant when he said he "knew one that would say, 'Let us tarry awhile that we may make an end the sooner;'" that is, that a little wise use of the brains may save a good deal of misapplied trouble. Very well. But I do not like Bacon. He was always quoting some Mrs. Harris or other for things that he did not care to say in his own person. And I maintain that the natural tendency of the general run of mankind to be slow is so serious a matter, that any man who furnishes them with epigrammatic excuses for going slower still is a common enemy. Much more, if he tells them that they will have heart-disease, or go mad, if they live so fast. True, there is in this matter the same sort of unequal distribution that there is in others. That is, if some poor devils appear too quick, it is because all the rapid work is devolved upon their shoulders. "*Drive the willing horse.*" Of course. But your deterrents will never influence those persons. They will go on till they drop. Meanwhile, the slow coaches will go slower and slower still; and the fast ones will have a harder, and yet a harder time of it. I protest against this arrangement.

It is deeply to be regretted that neither imaginative writers nor men of science have had the courage of their fancies, or their convictions, as the case may have been, upon this very simple subject. The poet Shakspeare, we are told, was not for an age, but for all time. Was he? Then why didn't he take more liberties with it? Why was he not better acquainted with, so to speak, the properties of time? He makes Ariel propose to put a girdle round the earth in forty minutes; but did any reader of an expansive mind ever feel satisfied with this? Was it worth while to invent an Ariel for a con-

clusion so lame and impotent as that? Why forty minutes? Forty winks are all very well, but that is after dinner. It is quite another matter when you can "ride on the curl'd clouds;" and forty seconds would have been much more like what you are entitled to expect when magic is a foot. But, for the matter of that, why forty seconds? Why twenty? Why ten? It is true that if you go on like this you must come to the total annihilation of time. A captious critic might say, "If Ariel takes exactly no time to put a girdle round the earth, there is no interval between his starting to do it and his coming back after having done it; and, in that case, why should Ariel start at all? Your proposition takes away the succession of events altogether, and brings us to the *punctum stans*." But I scorn the insinuation. These difficulties belong to the sphere of the infinite. Read Dean Mansel's "Bampton Lectures," and get what you can out of them. Read Hegel: *seyn* = *nicht-seyn*. I know all about it, and I don't care. I will discuss these matters with the Infinite when I come across it. In the meanwhile my motto is, Go ahead. Cut it short. *Vade, age, nate, roca zephyros, et labere pennis*. Just so. *Ite; ferte citi flammas; data vela; impellite remos*. Exactly. None of your *quid loquor, aut ubi sum*? That is hesitation. *Ite!* Yet so faint-hearted are even the very men whose vocation it is to save time, that James Watt would not hear of high pressure, and George Stephenson talked of ten miles an hour as the limit of railway speed. Talk not of railway accidents; say not that they come of the unnatural speed of express trains. Palpable sophistry! It is not because the express trains go so fast, but because the goods trains go so slow, that we have these catastrophes. And I only wish that those who do not like to move at express speed would shunt themselves on to a second line of rail. The poet Longfellow has lamented that at the end of every day there is something left undone. That is because the slow people will not co-operate with the swift. Otherwise we might all go to bed to-morrow night like Christians, and get up next morning with nothing else to do for the rest of our lives. The Hare might lie down with the Tortoise, and the Idle Apprentice eat air with the Industrious. *Hoc age* would be an idle legend, and a deserving universe would have its holiday. At all events, I shall do my share, and be as quick as ever I can.

If people go mad, it is their own affair. It is my own design to go as fast as possible, and I do not believe I shall go mad. If I do, I give the experts my free leave to talk as cleverly, and as long as they please, concerning Natural Selection, or the Survival of the Fittest.

MATTHEW BROWNE.

## LAUREATION AND POETS-LAUREATE.

---

IN ancient days, the reward of glorious deeds was a crown. To be ennobled or dignified in any way was to be crowned, and in ordinary speech, a crown and victory became correlative terms. In confirmation of this we do not require to point to the "bright examples of old Greece and Rome," nor indeed to those of any particular country. The practice was universal. All history shows that from the king upon the throne, from the general at the head of a triumphant army, or the statesman who had successfully directed his country's affairs, down to the meanest competitor in some national or local game, the mark and meed of his superiority was the bestowal of a crown.\* Every custom has its reason or rationale; and in this custom of coronation we think we trace a species of that worship which has in all ages been paid to the head or intellect of a man. "In man," says the Greek metaphysician, "there's nothing great but mind," and this practice we take to be an implied acknowledgment of that doctrine. In modern times, and amongst ourselves, we have adopted other modes of showing our regard for excellence and success; but even yet, when we wish to ennoble our public men, we do very much what the Greeks † did by theirs—we confer a *coronet* as well as a title.

These ancient insignia were made of various materials, as olive, pine, parsley, and sometimes even of gold and iron; but the crown

\* It is to this universal practice amongst the ancients that St. Paul refers, when he says: "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible" (1 Cor. ix. 24, 25). And again, in his Second Epistle to Timothy, he writes: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (2 Tim. iv. 7, 8). See also 2 Tim. ii. 5. The Hebrews, like ourselves, and indeed all nations, placed a crown or cap of state upon the head of their kings; and it is with reference to this custom that Roman soldiers, when they led Jesus forth, "platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head" (John xix. 2, 5; Matt. xxvii. 29). In the Bible generally "a crown" is frequently used figuratively as an emblem of dignity and a sign of victory. See, for example, Prov. xii. 4; xvi. 31; Lam. v. 16; Phil. iv. 1; Rev. iv. 4; xii. 1; xix. 12.

† Our classical readers may recollect that it was on the occasion of its being proposed to award a crown to Demosthenes, that that statesman and his opponent Æschines delivered themselves of two of their most famous orations.

that was most commonly employed was composed of laurel. There was much in the nature of this evergreen—this last being itself an emblem of immortality—to justify this selection of it; but the main cause of its adoption was doubtless owing to the fact that it was specially sacred to Phœbus Apollo. When this deity was on earth, the story goes that he fell in love with a beautiful young damsel, the daughter of Peneus. Day by day, in the garb of a shepherd, did he attempt to win the affections of this lady, but to her his addresses were distasteful. Notwithstanding his handsome appearance and engaging manners, she would not listen to his suit; and one day, to rid herself of his importunity, she sought safety in flight. The gallant gave chase; and as he was nearing on her, the maiden besought the protection of the gods, who suddenly converted her into a laurel.

In those prehistoric times, such metamorphoses were not uncommon; and our lover, in place of being horrorstruck at the transformation of his inamorata, boldly plucked off some of the leaves of the tree, and in fond remembrance placed them round his brows. This was the first instance of *laureation* with which we are acquainted, and from that day the accomplished Apollo was never seen without his bays. But there were other things besides affairs of love to which this scion of divinity turned his attention. He was a great poet and a splendid musician; and in course of time he was universally regarded as the presiding genius of poetry and most of the fine arts. Odes and invocations were addressed to his name; hymns and pæans were sung in his praise; and games or displays of intellectual skill, where a garland of laurel was the sole prize, were instituted in his honour. He became in fact the patron saint of all the followers of the Nine; and the laurel, dear to the master, was naturally an object of intense regard to the disciple as well. In this way it was that the bay came not only to be associated with victory and success, but also to be regarded as the special honour and ornament of those who distinguished themselves in the domain of poetry and the fine arts. "Laurelled" came to be a common epithet of the bard, and to be deemed worthy of this decoration was to be ennobled in the highest degree. We find that this is a favourite idea of the poets themselves, both ancient and modern. Horace, for example, while expatiating on the beauties of Pindar, evidently wishes to speak of him in the highest possible terms when he exclaims,—

"Laureâ donandus Apollinari," &c.

Or again, while discoursing on his own qualifications as a poet, it is easy to see that he prays for what he regards as the crowning honour of his life, when, addressing his muse, he says,—

"Sume superbiam  
Quæsitam meritis, et mihi Delphicâ  
Lauro cingo volens, Melpomene, comam."

Our own Chaucer too, in his "Flower and the Leaf," remarks on the "Nine Worthies":—

" And for their worthiness ful ofte have bore  
The crowne of laurer leaves on their hede,  
As ye may in your olde bookes rede."

Spenser, Shakspeare, Milton, and others, frequently give expression to the same idea, but it is unnecessary to multiply quotations on this point.

There is one thing, however, which is worthy of remark here. In these and similar passages the language is entirely figurative. Nowhere do the writers speak as if the priests of Phœbus Apollo were actually invested with the bays, but only as *worthy of being* such. A crown they knew was the emblem of victory and renown, and in their imagination they crowned the worthiest of their line with the Apollonic wreath. Garlands for feats of strength, for skill in arms, and for all manner of physical displays, were common; but so far as we are aware, it was only at the Delphic games,\* which, by the way, were dedicated to Apollo, that the tuneful race received this meed of praise. When these fell into disuse, the devotee of art had no public or regular opportunity of distinguishing himself, and was left to shift as best he might. There was, it is true, a tradition that Virgil and Horace were solemnly crowned with laurel by Augustus in the Roman Capitol; but later researches have shown that there is no foundation for this. It was left to the Emperor Domitian (A.D. 81—96) to revive to some extent the intellectual contests, or agones, of the Greeks, and to make the laurel wreath, as of yore, the prize for excellence therein. At these exhibitions the successful candidate was actually laureated, or crowned, by the emperor or one of his assistants, in presence of the assembled multitudes. This custom continued with more or less *éclat* till the reign of Theodosius, "when," according to the elder D'Israeli, "it was abolished as a remnant of paganism."

After the overthrow of the Roman Empire, and during a great portion of what is known as the "dark ages," we hear nothing of these displays and distinctions. Garlands and proud titles were then reserved for the "prowess knight" of tilt and tourney; and it is not, in fact, till the beginning of the fourteenth century that poetry may be said to have regained its "ancient lustre." Then feudalism and the service of knighthood were on the decline, and the spirit of arts and learning was again abroad. This will be sufficiently apparent when we mention that it was the age of Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Chaucer, and Froissart. Even in their own day the writings of such men were not without their influence; and perhaps the best instance of the truth of this is to be found in the public

\* It was at these games that Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides frequently contended for the dramatic prize, and where Sophocles was so frequently successful.

coronation of Francis Petrarch in the Capitol of Rome in the year 1341. This was in imitation of the honour that was supposed to have been conferred on Virgil and Horace, and may be said to have been one of the first tributes that the darkness and rude energy of the immediately preceding centuries paid to the "sweetness and light" of this. An account of this interesting ceremonial has been preserved; and from it we gather that, notwithstanding the eminence of the recipient, the distinction was not bestowed entirely *pro causâ honoris*. On the contrary, according to some, it was not till after the third day's examination—formal, no doubt—in various branches of literature, that the poet was conducted to the Capitol, and presented to the senate and people as one worthy to be crowned. Gibbon's description of this proceeding is highly picturesque:—"The ceremony of his coronation was performed in the Capitol by his friend and patron, the Supreme Magistrate of the Republic. Twelve patrician youths were arrayed in scarlet, six representatives of the most illustrious families in green robes, with garlands of flowers, accompanied the procession; in midst of the princes and nobles the Senator, Count of Anguillara, a kinsman of the Colonna, assumed his throne, and at the voice of a herald Petrarch arose. After discoursing on a text of Virgil, and thrice repeating his vows for the prosperity of Rome, he knelt before the throne, and received from the senator (in the chair) a laurel crown, with a more precious declaration, 'This is the reward of merit.' The people shouted long life to the Capitol and the poet. A sonnet in praise of Rome was accepted as the effusion of genius and gratitude, and after the whole procession had visited the Vatican, the profane wreath was suspended before the shrine of St. Peter." Nor was this enrolment amongst the order of poets an empty distinction. In those days men were not at liberty to write and teach what or where they pleased; but to the person so *laureated* there was granted, "as well in the holy city as elsewhere, the free and entire power of reading, disputing, and interpreting all ancient books, to make new ones, and compose poems, which, God assisting, shall endure from age to age." It may not be generally known that a similar "reward" was designed for the poet Tasso in 1594, but he unfortunately died the night before the ceremony was to have taken place.

From Italy this custom seems to have found its way into Germany, and thence throughout all Europe. In Germany the Emperor Maximilian I. founded what he called a Poetical College at Vienna in 1504, and expressly reserved for himself or his appointees the right of conferring the wreath. The decoration, though it might be bestowed by one of his Counts Palatine, was meant to come direct from the emperor himself; and the selected bard was called *Il Poeta Cesareo*. Of course the honour gradually became very common, and was awarded not so often to the poet as to the versifier. This very

institution of a "poetical college" was a standing contradiction to the maxim "*Poeta nascitur non fit*," and shows not only the idea that was then entertained about poetry, but also suggests the notion that the acquisition of the laurel crown would soon be regarded as a mere college degree. And that was exactly what happened. Towards the close of the Middle Ages, one of the best signs of the revival of letters and of the interest that was taken in intellectual pursuits was the foundation of numerous universities in various parts of Europe. These having in their infancy the good fortune to number amongst their professors such men as Abelard, Peter Lombard, Thomas Aquinas, and others equally eminent, soon became the most famous and fashionable places of resort in Europe. Students flocked to them from all quarters, and, as might be expected, the old contests of the arena gave place to the disputes of the lecture-hall. The spirit of the age was still strongly combative, and *victory* was as much coveted in the one display as it used to be in the other. Amongst these early university studies the art of poetry, or rather versification, was one of the chief objects of attention. It comprehended several departments of learning, but the chief effort was to be able to cap verses well and readily, to produce, in fact, on the shortest notice, hexameters and pentameters that might provoke a comparison with those of Virgil and Ovid. For excellence in this art a crown of laurel, once reserved for the brow of a Petrarch or a Tasso, was held to be the appropriate reward. The successful competitor was thereupon styled *poeta laureatus*, and ever after was reckoned a poet, at least of a certain order. It is for this reason that Selden, in his treatise on "Titles of Honour," speaks of the crown of laurel as "an ensign of the degree taken of mastership in poetry."

What we have just said applies to the early English and Scotch, as well as to the Continental, universities, and there is little doubt that it was from these scholastic laureations that the appellation of "poet-laureate" took its rise. Other countries, as Italy and Germany, may have had their "laurelled bards," who were so created solely by the favour, and perhaps by the hand, of the king; but in England there is pretty conclusive evidence that all poets-laureate originally emanated from the universities. This much, at least, is certain, that there is nothing to show that any of our poets was ever crowned by the hands of, or at the request of, the sovereign.

The earliest form and title which the Court or royal poet assumes in English history is that of a *Versificator*. He wrote in Latin, which, of course, implied a learned education, and his theme is generally a battle or expedition in which the king had borne a part, and of which the writer had been a witness. Thus, so early as the reign of Richard I. we meet with a royal *versificator* in the person of *Gulielmus Peregrinus*—the *cognomen* or surname in this case being, in all probability, the result of his wanderings—who accompanied that monarch to Palestine, and gave an account of the first crusade. Nor

does the presence of such an attendant in the camp of that wild, though generous and lion-hearted king, at all surprise us. In contradistinction to most of his nobles and followers, and perhaps also to the general spirit of the times, it is well known that Richard had a passionate regard for the minstrel's art, or the "*Gay Science*," as it was then called. Of this element in his character Sir Walter Scott, in his "*Talisman*," makes skilful use, when he brings Blondel de Nesle, a Norman *trouvère*, upon the scene, and from a "budget fraught with newest minstrelsy" caused him to chant the lay of the "*Bloody Vest*" in presence of Queen Berengaria, the lovely Edith Plantagenet, and all the lords and ladies of the Court. On that occasion our readers may recollect that Richard claimed to be "a guild brother of the *Joyeuse Science*," and canvassed Blondel's stanzas with all the keenness of a professed critic.

In those early days, records of even public events were very scant, and it would be unreasonable to expect anything like an unbroken list of the names and works of the royal versifiers that flourished under the successive monarchs. Still, we are not left entirely without information regarding these functionaries. In the time of Henry III., for example, we find by two separate entries in the records that a pension of one hundred shillings—a greater sum than at first appears—was paid to the *regis versificator* of that day. In the following reigns also of Edward I. and Edward II., we learn that the post was held by a somewhat notable personage called Andrew Baston. This Baston was a Carmelite monk, and according to a very learned authority, Bishop Bale, a laureated poet and public orator at Oxford. Like Gulielmus Peregrinus, he accompanied the king on his military expeditions, and took care to commemorate his master's exploits in suitable heroics. In this capacity he went with Edward I. to Scotland in 1304, and as the result of what he saw and experienced at various times there, gave to the world—at least, to as many as were able to peruse the same—his "*De Strivilniensi Obsidione*" (Siege of Stirling Castle), his "*De Altero Scotorum*," and other poems, some of which are still to be found in Fordun. About this same Baston a story is told, to the effect that, being part of the retinue that Edward II. took with him to the north, he was taken prisoner at the battle of Bannockburn, and by way of payment for his ransom was ordered by Robert the Bruce to celebrate the victory of the Scotch in his best manner. This was turning the tables with a vengeance; but perhaps he had reason to feel, with another poet, "*liberty's a glorious feast*," and acted accordingly.

Continuing our course historically, there flourished during the reigns of Edward III. and his successor, Richard II., the immortal Chaucer and the "*moral Gower*," both of whom, it is sometimes asserted, were the laureates, or Court poets, of the day. Of this, however, there is no evidence, but much to the contrary, especially in the case of the former. In the first place, there is no positive

proof that he belonged to either of the universities, and far less that he was laureated. In the second place, whatever the extent of his learning may have been, all his poems were written in the vernacular, which, according to Warton, it was not customary for the royal laureate to do till after the period of the Reformation. And, in the third place, it is almost unnecessary to remark that his poems are about as far removed from the usual order of regal "versified" productions as they can well be. The only ground that we can discover for the assertion is the fact that he was on terms of considerable intimacy with Edward and Richard, and received pensions or sums of money at various times from both. On investigation, however, it will be found that his connection with royalty was a political rather than a poetical one, and that what he received from the Treasury was the reward, not of his fame as a poet,—for he was rather late in life in distinguishing himself in that capacity,—but of the eminence of his public services, both at home and abroad. But, indeed, there is little need to indulge in conjecture on this point. If Chaucer himself, Shakspeare, and Ben Jonson may be regarded as authorities, it was Henry Scogan that was the Court poet of Edward III., Richard II., and partly of Henry IV. In one of the minor poems of the first-named bard, entitled "*L'Envoy de Chaucer à Scogan*," there occurs the following verse, which we think is pretty well decisive of this matter:—

"Scogan, thou knelest at the stremes hede \*  
Of grace, of alle honour, and of worthynesse.  
In th'ende of which streme I am dul as dede,†  
Forgete in solytary wildernesse;  
Yet, Scogan, thinke on 'Tullius' kyndenesse;  
Mynde thy frende there it may fructyfyc,  
Farewel, and loke thou never eft love dyflie."

Of this same Scogan, Ben Jonson, in his *Masque of the Fortunate Isles*, writes:—

*Mere Fool.* Scogan? What was he?

*Sophiel.* O, a fine gentleman, and master of arts of Henry the Fourth's time, that made disguises for the king's sons, and writ in ballad-royal, daintily well.

*Mere Fool.* But wrote he like a gentleman?

*Sophiel.* In rhyme, fine tinkling rhyme and flow and verse.

This qualification of "Master of Arts," which Sophiel mentions here, confirms what we have said above about the connection between the university and the Court.

It is not till the reign of Edward VI. (1461—1483) that we meet with the first distinct mention of the title "poet-laureate," as applied to the Court poet of the time. This occurs in a translation of the "*History of the Siege of Rhodes*," by John Kay, who, in dedicating the book to the king, calls himself "hys humble poete laureate."

\* Alluding to Scogan's residence at the Court of Windsor.

† Chaucer was then residing at Greenwich in rather embarrassed circumstances.

During the short and troubled reigns of Edward V. and Richard III. it would be almost preposterous to look for a representative of the followers of "the Nine" at Court; but on the accession of Henry VII. and the termination of the Wars of the Roses, learning and the other arts of peace again met with their acknowledgment and reward. The year after Henry VII. was crowned, he, by an instrument entitled *Pro Poeta Laureato*, a copy of which is to be found in Rymer's *Fœdera*, created one Andrew Bernard his poet-laureate, and assigned to him a salary of fifteen marks, until he should obtain some other appointment. This Bernard was a native of Toulouse, an Augustine monk, and a very learned man. All his pieces as laureate were in Latin, and from the title of these we see that it was with him that the practice of writing birthday odes, and other congratulations to royalty, may be said to begin. Besides the laureateship, he held the post of historiographer to the king, and several other preferments, both lay and ecclesiastical. As historiographer, he wrote in prose a "Chronicle of the Life and Achievements of Henry VII. to the taking of Perkin Warbeck," which has recently appeared as one of the publications issued by the Master of the Rolls. These appointments he seems to have retained till his death in the reign of his patron's successor.

After Bernard, or even during his lifetime, it is frequently stated that John Skelton was the laureate and Court poet of Henry VIII. This, we think, is a mistake. Skelton was only a laureate graduate, and not a royal bard. It is true that at an early period of his career he was tutor to some of the royal princes, but afterwards, when he took to writing satirical pieces, he was not only disowned by the king, but became an object of hatred and persecution to Wolsey and the party in power at that day. He appears to have laureated at Oxford and, according to some, also at Cambridge and the University of Louvain, about the close of the fifteenth century. He was a clergyman, and rector of Diss, in Norfolk. His character, however, does not seem to have been of the most correct description. He led a loose life, and was fond of indulging in buffooneries in the pulpit. For these he was suspended by his bishop; and on account of his scurrilous invectives against the "proud cardinal," and others of the priesthood, he was further obliged to seek the sanctuary of Westminster Abbey, where he died in 1529. There is no doubt that he was a rather noted personage, being, in fact, regarded by such a man as Erasmus as the "light and glory of British letters;" and this, coupled with the fact of his laureation, may have afterwards given rise to the notion that he was the poet-laureate, in the sense of his being the Court poet of that reign. But, apart from the nature of his writings and the facts of his life, which distinctly negative this, there is evidence that amongst his contemporaries, at least, he was regarded as only a laureate of the schools. Barklay, for example, a poet of that day, in speaking of Skelton, makes use of the following rather uncomplimentary and unsavoury verse:—

"Then is he decked as poets laureate  
 When stinking Thais made him her graduate;  
 If they have smelled the artes triviall,  
 They count them poets hye and heroically."

And in a poem prefixed to an edition of his works, published in 1568, there occur the lines—

"Nay, Skelton wore the laurel wreath,  
 And past in scholes ye knoe,"

This case of Skelton's seems to confirm our remark that in this country the appellation of poet-laureate had its origin in an academical degree. Up to this time it is extremely probable that, as a rule, only eminent university scholars, who had obtained this degree, were appointed to the post of "versifier" in the royal household. In this way they became Court poets as well as poets-laureate. After the Reformation, however, a different state of things arose. Hitherto, as we have stated above on the authority of Warton, "it was not customary for the royal laureate to write in English;" but, continues the same authority, "with the Reformation our veneration for the Latin tongue diminished, and gradually a better sense of things banished the pedantry of monastic erudition, and taught us to cultivate our native tongue." As a consequence of this we find, in the immediately succeeding reigns, the names of men who were promoted to the office of Court poet, certainly more from their eminence as English writers than as Latin versifiers. These were still called poets-laureate; but this was entirely by way of metaphor and respect for the ancient dignity of the title. Nay, the appellation was retained after its real significance was gone; for, about the period of which we are speaking, the practice of laureation itself at our English universities fell into disuse, and all that remained to remind one of the ancient ceremonial was the name bestowed on a certain Court official, who may never have been within the halls of a university at all.

The first, and perhaps the most distinguished of the more modern order of royal poets, was the author of the "*Faerie Queen*," who speaks of the laurel as the—

"Mead of mighty conquerors  
 And poets sage."

Malone and others insist that Elizabeth had no laureate; but, although the patent and title do not seem to have been formally granted to Spenser, there is no doubt that he was both the Court poet and a pensioner of that reign. His "*Gloriana*," however, was too parsimonious a woman to be over-liberal to a writer of verses; and there is too good ground for believing that this "child of fancy" was frequently subjected to great privations, and was giving expression to his own experience when he wrote—

"Full little knowest thou, that hast not try'd  
 What Hell it is, in suing long to bide."

The patent under which the existing laureateship is held is dated

1680, and was granted by Charles I. in favour of no less a poet than "Rare Ben Jonson." It fixes his salary at £100 per annum and a tierce of Spanish Canary wine from the cellars of Whitehall.\* From this period the poet-laureate becomes more distinctly than before an officer of the king's household, whose business it was to address congratulatory odes and other verses to royalty, especially on particular public events.

After Jonson there came Sir William Davenant, of whom about the most that can be said is, that he wrote a heroic poem entitled "Gondibert," and fought most valiantly on behalf of his royal master, Charles I. To Davenant succeeded the mighty Dryden. Besides the laureateship he held the post of historiographer royal, which brought him another £200 per annum. To secure these appointments it is feared that "Glorious John" was not very scrupulous in what he said or did respecting royalty. He might almost be called the poetical Vicar of Bray. On the principle of worshipping the "rising sun" it is well known that he put together some very pretty rhymed flatteries respecting Richard Cromwell; and it has been suspected that it was to please the Catholic James that he changed his religion and penned the "Hind and Panther." With the revolution and the accession of William III. Dryden was discarded, and the wreath conferred upon his enemy, "honest Thomas Shadwell," best known as a writer of very indifferent comedies. This acceptance of the laurel, however, was not a step upon which Shadwell had reason to congratulate himself. To say nothing of the loss of office and emolument, the insult implied in the appointment was such that the satiric Dryden could hardly be expected to brook. Accordingly he gave to the world his "Mac Flecknoe, in which no pains are spared successfully to impale his substitute and rival. After Shadwell, there came in succession Nahum Tate, the collaborateur of Brady in the metrical translation of the Psalms of David; Nicholas Rowe, the translator of "Lucan; and one Laurence Eusden, "a parson much bemused in beer," and the author of some most execrable coronation and birthday odes. What does the reader think of the following stanza, part of an address to George II., by the last-named bard:—

"Hail, mighty Monarch! whose desert alone,  
Would, without birthright, raise thee to a throne;  
Thy virtues shine peculiarly nice,  
Ungloom'd with a confinity to vice."

Surely the "force of fancy could no further go!" But the truth on this matter is soon told. After Dryden there were no laureates

\* This measure of wine was afterwards commuted into an additional annual payment of £27; so that all the wit of the "Bon Gaultier" and other bards about

"The laureate bold,  
With his butt of sherry  
To keep him merry,"

falls to the ground.

worthy of the name till comparatively recent times. Accordingly, about the beginning of the last century the wreath fell into a very withered and languishing condition, and the office itself into utter disrepute. The effusions of the "stipendiary poet" abounded in the most abject and fulsome flatteries, unredeemed by the faintest ray of poetic light. Nor was this all. In former times the poet had, as a rule, confined the display of his art to some great or public occasion, but from the time of Eusden (appointed in 1727) it became the custom of the laureate to compose, at least twice a year, odes in praise of the monarch and his government, which were set to music, and sung in all the chapels-royal. In this state of things it is not to be wondered at that the post and the appointee became the butt of all the gibes and ridicule of the climbers of Parnassus. To adopt the language of Sir John Falstaff, "Men of all sorts took a pride to gird at them, and without being witty in themselves they were certainly the cause of much wit in other men." This mode of satire upon the laureates began, according to Dr. Johnson, with Suckling; and, as all readers of the "Bon Gaultier Ballads" will admit, has been successfully maintained down to the present day. But while most of these squibs were very good-natured and clever, there were, on the other hand, not a few which were dictated solely by a spirit of malice and detraction. One of the worst of this description is a prose piece by Pope, entitled, "The Poet-Laureate," in which, under the pretence of writing a history of the order, he contrives to lash his enemies Dennis, Cibber, and Tibbald. On the death of Eusden in 1730, it was the second of these, Colley Cibber, hero of the "Dunciad," that was appointed to the post. For seven-and-twenty years Colley favoured the *Gentleman's Magazine* with his biennial instalment of nonsense verses in the shape of birthday and new year's odes to royalty. This course of laureate degradation was continued in the person of William Whitehead. Whitehead was no poet, but seems to have been a bit of a humourist. The attacks of the critics he took in very good part, and occasionally was able to give as good as he got. In a piece of his entitled, "An Apology for all Laureates, past, present, and to come," he thus addresses his assailants:—

"Ye silly dogs, whose half year lays  
Attend, like satellites or bays,  
And still with added lumber load  
Each birthday and each new-year ode,  
Why will ye strive to be severe?  
In pity to yourselves forbear;  
Nor let the sneering public see  
What numbers write far worse than he."

Of the irksomeness of his duties he appears to have been painfully conscious, and sounds the following note of apology for the poverty of the laureate's effusions:—

"His muse obliged by sack and pension,  
Without a subject or invention,

Must certain words in order set,  
 As innocent as a gazette;  
 Must some half meaning half disguise,  
 And utter neither truth nor lies."

It was left for Thomas Warton, author of the "History of English Poetry," and successor of Whitehead, to be the first to help to raise the laurel out of the mire and contempt into which it had fallen. It so happened also that the ancient custom of laureation at the University of Oxford was revived in the person of Warton, and he was thus the first in modern times to combine the double honour of being a laureated as well as a Court poet. He was a shrewd, sensible man of letters, and his pieces are a vast improvement upon the drivelling flatteries and far-fetched conceits of his immediate predecessors. His odes are manly, independent, and loyal; and though it cannot be said that he had much of the genius of the *poeta natus*, yet it must be admitted that some of his verses are not without the ring of true poetry about them. Of course, his biennial "measure of praise and verse" exposed him to the shafts of the wits, who, in his case at least, very much overshot the mark. One of the wittiest and most successful of these poetic wags was Peter Pindar (Dr. Walcot), who thus sums up the qualifications of a royal bard:—

"Laureats should boast a bushel of invention,  
 Or yield up all poetical pretension."

In another piece, entitled "Advice to a Future Laureat," he says, speaking of Warton:—

"Tom prov'd unequal to the laureat's place,  
 Luckless, he warbled with an Attic grace:  
 The language was not understood at Court,  
 Where bow and curts'y, grin and shrug resort.  
 Tom was a scholar—luckless wight,  
 Lodg'd with old manners in a musty college;  
 He knew not that a palace hated knowledge,  
 And deem'd it pedantry to spell and write."

We make these quotations, not so much to illustrate the nature of the attacks to which the laureate was perpetually subjected, as to give the reader some notion of the mighty difference between the present and the past aspect of things.

Once more, but only once more, was the laurel destined to wither for a time on the brows of Henry James Pye, a name now utterly unknown to fame, and which we have no desire further to call up from the "dull oblivion of its drear abode."

On his death, in 1813, the laureateship was offered to Sir Walter Scott, but was declined with thanks. In this, it is said, Sir Walter imitated the example of Gray, who had been pressed to accept the office on the death of Cibber. At last the disgrace which had so long attended the garland was about to be effectually removed. For a time the appointment went a-begging, but to the oft-repeated cry

"Wanted a Laureate," Robert Southey—not without many misgivings on his part—happily responded. Southey was certainly not a poet of the first rank, but his name was the first for more than a century that lent a freshness and a lustre to the crown that had once been worn by a Spenser, a Jonson, and a Dryden. Several years before, Gibbon, in a note to his account of the coronation of Petrarch, had strongly condemned "the ridiculous custom" of furnishing twice a year "the measure of praise and verse," to which we have alluded above; and from the time of George III.'s illness in 1810, the practice fell into entire disuse. From this almost degrading task, therefore, Southey was exempt, and henceforth we find but few allusions to "the beauties and graces" of royalty. The author of "Thalaba" and "The Curse of Kehama," held the post for thirty years, and on his decease was succeeded by his friend and "master," Wordsworth, of whom it is unnecessary to say a word save this, that of the many hundreds of poems which he wrote, not one can we find in his collected works which has any connection with his position as laureate. Perhaps this may be explained by the fact that he retained the appointment only seven years. On his decease in 1850, the public voice unanimously declared the author of "Locksley Hall," "The Princess," "Mariana," and other famous poems which had then appeared, to be his worthiest successor. Nor was Mr. Tennyson slow to accept the honour. No longer was there any need for Southey's misgivings. The laurel now bloomed in all its pristine freshness; and gratefully did the poet assume a poet's "highest meed and praise," so much the

"Greener from the brows  
Of him who uttered nothing base."

During the twenty years that Mr. Tennyson has worn the bays, his official, or quasi-official, productions may be said to number only four. These are his Odes on the death of Wellington and the opening of the Great Exhibition, his "Welcome to Alexandra," and the Dedication of his Idylls to the late Prince Consort. These are all worthy of his great name, and stand in striking contrast to the measured panegyric and pompous conceits of less than a century ago.

With the advent of Southey the reader will perceive that the Apollonic garland entered upon a new and bright, and still more bright career, until at length the publication of a volume by the laureate is regarded as an event of the season. Again the wreath and renown are correlative terms; and, forgetting the *poeta laureatus* as he appears in English history, we are unconsciously carried back to the more ancient and symbolical significance of the title. We close by expressing the hope that the modern line of "laureled bards" thus happily inaugurated, may prove a long and glorious one; but that the time is far distant when we shall be called upon to look for a successor to the present high priest of Phœbus Apollo.

E. ROLLAND.